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ABSTRACT

Reflecting concerns for the present state of and current trends in English education on an international scope, the articles in these conference proceedings focus on the multicultural environment, teacher education, and research in English instruction. Following an opening address on the past and future of English teaching, the remaining articles discuss the following topics: (1) multicultural education and the English teacher, (2) constraints in the teaching of written composition, (3) English in an integrated curriculum, (4) assessing the effects of a writing project, (5) evaluating writing achievement, (6) English testing, (7) motivational effects of different schemes for assessing student writing, (8) language learning, (9) patterns of child control of the writing process, (10) reading materials selection, and (11) research in English education. An appendix listing conference delegates concludes the proceedings. (HTH)

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ENGLISH IN THE EIGHTIES

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To Merron Chorny
Chairman,
International Steering Committee
1972-79
in deep appreciation
of his services.

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INTRODUCTION

The central concern of teachers of English has always been the well-being of our students. We are linked with other human beings in an endeavour to help them reach maturity, and the area in which we offer them special assistance is our subject English – for many their mother tongue, for others the medium of a new culture, for all a means whereby they can come to understand their environment, give expression to their thoughts and aspirations, and form peaceful, mutually beneficial relationships with others. For us to attempt to find pleasure in our subject alone without this human concern leads to barrenness and emptiness and to our subject losing all its savour. The passionate regard for our students on the other hand elevates our endeavours and nurtures the delight in our subject.

It was this desire to achieve the highest standards in these endeavours that led to the formation of the international movement for the teaching of English. Informal contacts and individual enterprises had prompted some to recognise the value of what was occurring elsewhere and the need to explore the potentiality for their own circumstances. As a result on the initiative of CCTE, NATE and NCTE the First International Conference was held at Dartmouth, USA in 1966 to enable a more thorough investigation of the perspectives and practices of each country for the benefit of all.

At that conference the International Steering Committee was established to consolidate the important gains of Dartmouth and to promote exchange not only among the member associations but also between all teachers of English. Under its guidance the Second International Conference was held in York, England in 1971. Shortly thereafter the AATE was accepted as a member association and gradually emerged the plan to hold the Third International Conference in Sydney in 1980. With the conference we crossed the equator and the internationality of our concern was declared physically as well as spiritually.

The object of the international conference is to bring members together to enable them to investigate together matters of mutual interest and concern. The conferences facilitate the exchange of ideas and the formation of strong personal links which promote the continuing process of interchange and collaboration away from formal meetings. Equally importantly, the conferences enable each member to look afresh at what is being done in his own country or region. At times our approaches come as responses to our particular environment and special conditions, in the process of which basic principles become clouded. Contact with others from different traditions and environments, afforded by the conferences, is invaluable in assisting us to separate convention from principle. Together we discover new ideas and we correct or polish old ways.

To this end the Sydney conference was designed as a working one, in which delegates would have ample time for close, profitable exchanges. In consultation with all member associations, we decided that we should concentrate in seven major areas, and set up the following commissions within the conference to direct our deliberations:

1. English Teaching and the multicultural environment
2. Teacher education
3.-4. Schools, learners, the community and the teaching of English
5. Assessment of the implications of failure
6. Language development
7. The place of literature (including children's literature)
8. Research, the teacher and change.

Within the scope of these commissions are some of the major issues confronting the English teaching profession today. Delegates elected the commission of greatest concern and served in that commission for the whole week, so that the problems associated with it could be studied in depth and with continuity.

In the end some 800 delegates attended the conference, with over 200 from overseas, representing Canada, Great Britain, United States, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Singapore; so we were truly an international gathering. Because of the nature of the conference, however, the contributions of delegates were more in the form of working documents or introductory statements to discussion topics than publishable articles. The papers collected in this volume were on the whole presented in plenary sessions or joint commission meetings. They encompass the range of interests of the commissions and provide an overview of the thinking that formed the base of much of the discussion at the conference. Their arrangement here reflects generally their connection with the various commissions listed above, though most of the papers naturally have wider implications.

It was one thing to be at the time both Chairman of the ISC and President of AATE, but quite another to bring the conference into being. I must record a deep indebtedness and appreciation for the support of the councils of all the member associations, and above all from the Organising Committee, Management Committee and the Committee of Chairmen, making special mention of the conference director, Miss Roslyn Arnold. We are also indebted to a number of other individuals and organisations, particularly the University of Sydney and its Chancellor Sir Hermann Black, the NSW Department of Education and its Director-General Mr D. Swan, the Primary English Teachers' Association, and the British Council.

At the conference a special meeting was arranged for the New Zealand delegates and they decided to proceed to the formation of a New Zealand Association for the Teaching of English. The Canadian Council for the Teaching of English (CCTE) accepted the responsibility for organising the Fourth International Conference, possibly in 1985.

In all our preparations for the third conference we had seen it as an extension of the previous two: not as something bigger or better but as an essential development of the previous conferences and as the foundation for a future one for our task is a continuing one. I believe progress was made at Sydney and that the discussions and investigations at the conference have added to our understanding and will continue to do so. I look forward to the next conference and advancing further.

Robert D. Eagleson,
Chairman, International Steering Committee,
President (1976-1980), Australian Association for the Teaching of English

A Testimony

When it was decided that the Third International Conference was to be held in Australia, a spontaneous call came from members that Professor James Britton should be invited both to be present as a delegate and to deliver the opening address. This wish was inspired by the significant and humane contribution that he has made to the teaching of English in all the member countries of the International Committee and in many other countries as well. He had been present at the First and Second International Conferences and in the intervening years had served on the Steering Committee actively promoting the international movement.

So earnest was this desire that many members contributed to a fund to enable him to be present and the Councils of AATE and NCTE also made substantial donations in recognition of his invaluable services. We count it an honour to be able to publish the address he gave.

Opening Address

English teaching: Retrospect and Prospect

The James McAuley Memorial Lecture and Conference Opening Address.

James Britton
Formerly, University of London

My first contact with Professor James McAuley was in August 1971 when he traced me to the University of Connecticut and telephoned to invite me to the UNESCO Conference in Sydney in the summer of 1972. In April 1972 I was in New York for a meeting of the International Steering Committee (a post-Dartmouth committee representing USA, Canada and England) and from that meeting came a letter to Jim McAuley inviting AATE to be represented on that committee. Just a year later, the invitation having been accepted, Jim himself attended a meeting of the committee in London, and paid a visit to my home *en route*. There he met also Merron Chorny and John Dixon (both of them here today). It was a fascinating evening.

I remember him above all as poet and politician – and that's an interesting combination. He was, as you will know, a native of these parts and a graduate of this university. You may not know that his gifts as poet and politician made him notorious on one occasion, when with his fellow poet, Harold Stewart, he brought off a famous literary hoax: a modernist literary journal published the work of one "Ern Malley" – a random concoction drawn from diverse sources that included a scholarly American report on the drainage of mosquito breeding grounds. The motive – to protest the kind of verses being produced at that time in Britain by such writers as Dylan Thomas and Henry Treece.

Poet and politician. When James McAuley got on to politics he was liable, to quote a line of his own poetry, to "thrust his speech among them like a sword". On that evening in 1973 we had talked the politics of English teaching; but before the evening was over we persuaded him to round it off by reading some of his own poetry – and that is how I remember him best. It is appropriate, however, to remember that his political acumen lies behind the realisation today of a proposal he put before the International Steering Committee in 1973 – that there should be, in 1979 or 1980 – an international English conference in Australia.

I wonder what Jim McAuley would have said had he been standing here today, faced with this topic, "English Teaching: Retrospect and Prospect"? I certainly cannot speak for him. Nor shall I attempt a "state of the art" summative statement. The more I see of such oracular, even cabbalistic, statements – my own or other people's – the less am I tempted to embark on another one. I can offer you my retrospect, my perspective on the future and it will be no more than a personal statement – one man's hopeful construction of the realities of English teaching, as George Kelly would have put it.

I set up shop as an English teacher in a state secondary school fifty years ago next month. The year before I began, in 1929, there was published an official report on *The Teaching of English in the Elementary Schools of London*. A curious document. Among other recommendations it warned teachers to "draw a sharp distinction between the language of the home and the street and the language the school is trying to achieve". And it went so far as to suggest that teachers should not set children to talk or write about their homes or neighbourhoods, because that would be inviting them to use the wrong language. (Some of you have heard me refer to that before – how can I but repeat myself when I talk so much?)

There are plenty of teachers in our various countries who still operate "a fresh start policy" for language in their classrooms. But we have made some advances in fifty years: no official statement would dare to put forward so linguistically naive and ignorant a view today. Thirty years of intensive study of the way children acquire language in infancy – thirty years of watching and listening to children – have taught us a lesson we shall not forget.

"Watching and listening" – it is only in more recent years that we have begun to realise how language behaviour builds on earlier non-verbal behaviour: how cooperative routines set up between infant and adult, mostly in the form of play, increasingly generate *meaning* for the infant; and how early language comes in to highlight meanings already established in this way. Thereafter, language has a crucial role to play, enriching and extending cooperative behaviour, cumulatively reaping the harvest of earlier understandings, organising memory into narrative form, vastly increasing in scope and accessibility the body of expectations with which the child will meet every new event. Here is learning indeed, a model for all subsequent learning: using language to make sense of the world gives the child, Hey Presto!, a mastery of language. It is our task as teachers to build on that learning, to enrich and extend it, to harness it ever more closely to ever more complex modes of experience.

This challenge has never been greater than it is today in the multicultural classrooms we are facing. Wayne O'Neil, American linguist, broke into a learned discussion once to say:

> I think that any book that comes out of this conference ought to make it perfectly clear that all of what we talk about is for naught if in fact American education is going to proceed to be exactly what it has been, a way of drawing people away from their roots and cultures rather than a way of increasing their activity within those groups and cultures (Kavanagh and Matlingly, 1972: p. 156).

I know no more promising way of increasing such activity within sub-cultural groups than by cherishing and nourishing the speech of the home and the neighbourhood and by helping it to find the kind of expression, in story, poem, play, which can communicate the spirit of the subculture to a multicultural audience. That nourishing means, of course, that we can no longer limit our concern for literature to a concern for any canon, be it classical or national. Standard English? Yes, that's on the agenda too, seen essentially as the written language in which information is stored and made available.

In the 'thirties we knew nothing about language learning in infancy. Such studies as there were were locked away in fat, unreadable psychology manuals. Clearly, our educational bosses were no wiser than we were, on

the evidence of the 1929 report I have referred to. And that fixes my base-line.

The 'forties, among other events we have tended to forget, saw the teenage revolution. Young people gained, once and for all, a kind of independence (which, like the age of puberty, grows earlier every year). New attitudes to authority emerged: a teacher's authority could no longer be assumed but had to be earned, patiently and sometimes painfully. Martin Buber understood this very well: writing in 1947 he spoke of the period as "the time of the crumbling of bonds" and saw, in consequence, that the teacher could no longer represent "the ambassador of history to this intruder, the child", but "faces the child as individual to individual".

If I have laboured this point, it is because it is so consistently forgotten by certain critics of enlightened educational policies today – including some of those who urge us "back to basics": nothing is more sadly futile that a belief that we can put the clock back.

The 'fifties I find difficult to recall in any clear focus. Perhaps that is because it was a decade of spadework; teachers in their classrooms patiently tackling the task of working out new methods of teaching and learning appropriate to the new relationships, the individual to individual stance of teacher to child. For the new relationships demanded a new conception of the learning process itself, a move from a uni-directional to an interactive view.

In England, I believe one important aspect of this movement was the increasing influence of primary school teachers on their secondary school colleagues. The secondary school subject specialist is more prone to seeing learning as a uni-directional process – something proceeding from teacher to pupil – than is the primary school teacher who must see himself as a facilitator of learning in all areas of the curriculum.

I do not imply that the problems of the secondary school can all be solved by applying the successful experience of primary school teachers – indeed some of the problems posed by attempting this rapprochement seem as far away from solution today as ever. But the recognition that learning is always an interactive process in a crucial first step: its implications – that talking and writing may be modes of learning, that a curriculum must be negotiable, that in-school and out-of-school learning should be inseparable parts of one pattern – the working out of these implications constitutes an area of active innovation in secondary schools today.

These were the ideas that blossomed in the 'sixties, a heady and dangerous decade. I see it as a "grand processional" from the Dartmouth Conference in America to the Bullock Report in England. It was heady to have ideas that had germinated in quiet processes and small circles suddenly come out into the open; and dangerous in the way that an institutionalised orthodoxy is always dangerous. The new orthodoxy was no exception: the grand processional swept into its wake many who were more in the swim than in the know, and they did much to supply ammunition to the critics, the nostalgic admirers of education in the "good old days". The term "child-centred education" came to be widely used, and it seems to me a highly ambiguous and even misleading term. Interactive learning (like the cooperative ploys of infant and adult) is a *joint* undertaking. Vygotsky (1978), urging the social and cultural nature of learning, has put this very clearly, showing how operations and calculations originally carried out overtly in joint activity with an adult become internalised with the help of

inner speech and so shape the child's consciousness. "Adult and child-centred" seems a more accurate description of the kind of education we have in mind, appropriate to an interactive view of learning, and highlighting the crucial role of language, in its many modes, as the principal instrument of interaction.

It is easy, I think, to characterise the 'seventies: it is the "age of anxiety". You remember that Auden wrote a "Baroque Eclogue" with that title epitomising the years of the Second World War. But his definition of anxiety in that poem seems to me to fit exactly the mood of the 'seventies: "their vision shrinks as their dreams darken". A world recession creating basic uncertainty about the future – the darkening of our dreams; and with that a shrinking of perspectives, a limiting of the number of factors we are prepared to take account of in making a judgment. In educational terms, this means a "back to basics" policy, ("rationalisation", as some administrators interpret the term) and, in England, the anti-progressive views of the Black Papers.

By this view, my grand processional has been re-christened "the decadent 'sixties". The movement, as I have suggested, draws ammunition from practices based on a laissez faire philosophy and other indications of the work of bandwagon progressives. I think there is an urgent need for thorough study of the highly complex structure of the open classroom, the highly complex demands of interactive learning and negotiated curricula. And for that reason I welcome two recent studies produced by your National Working Party on the role of language in learning, *Negotiating the Curriculum* and *Literacy Around the Workbench.*

What we have learned must be preserved, even when it seems like a soft sell in a hard market. We have learned that mastery of language comes with its purposeful use and that attempts to teach the bare skills by practice exercises is bound to fail. It is the user's own intention that releases the powers of mastery: any practice will help only in so far as it feeds directly into a mainstream of activity that is purposeful.

Put at its broadest, we master language by using it to make the most of our lives. Within the school context, this suggests three major intentions or purposes for language to fulfil. *First*, that of establishing and maintaining relationships. If learning is an interactive process, we can't teach people we don't know, so the building of a personal relationship comes logically first.

Here are some extracts from a journal written by a nine-year-old in an elementary school in Toronto where I spent some weeks two years ago. The school is in an area largely occupied by Chinese and Greek families and the writer, Linda, is a Chinese Canadian. The words in italics are her teacher's responses:

> Friday, Jan 18th, 1978. After my rough copy of my project I am going to rerange my project around. I am going to put growing up first page, What monkeys do to eat in second page. Why do monkeys make faces page three. *Sounds interesting*!
>
> Jan. 25. It was interesting. Did you think it was very interesting or interesting or just a little interesting? Mrs. E., I'm sorry your husband wouldn't let you have another dog but anyways someone already took the dog . . . How's Malcolm? I hope he isn't sick or anything. *Malcolm is fine, thank you – he cries when I leave in the morning and gets very excited when I come home!* . . .

Feb. 14. The last time I wrote I told you that I was school sick and you asked me why. Well now I will tell you why because I like to learn, I also like you, I like to do work and when I was away I miss the class. Today I am glad to be here because I wouldn't want to miss the Valentine party. Mrs. E., can you give me a few suggests for the party. What I mean is give me a few suggests what to bring for the party. *(1) a sharp knife to cut apples, (2) serviettes, (3) little bags to take goodies home in.*

Feb. 20. Mrs. E., thank you very much for the suggests for the Valentine party. I'm sorry you were away. What did you come up with? *I was very sick!* When you were away the class had other teachers. The first teacher's name was Mrs. G., and the second teacher's name was Mr. M. They were both nice teachers. You know sometimes I wish you were my mother. *Lots of the time I wish I had a little girl like you!*

Feb. 21. It's too bad I'm Chinese because if I was English you could adoupt me. . . .

March 29. It's my birthday today! Ouch! I hate getting my patty-whacks. Mrs. E., can you tell the people who are going to give me my patty-whacks to do it lightly. I have a tender ass. Just a joke, but please tell them. *O.K.*

The children in that class enjoyed writing their journals because they clearly fulfilled a purpose – that of making them feel happy about their teacher and about the way she felt about them. ("Yes, we kind of *communicate*", Linda told me.)

The *second* purpose to be achieved through using language is that of *learning* in its accepted sense. Teachers of all subjects are discovering the value of expressive talk and writing as a means of coming to understand, of making your own the material of the curriculum. I shall call that Learning I and see it as part of the process of organising the objective aspects of experience. That leaves the *third* purpose of using language or what I call Learning II – often not recognised as learning at all. This is the process of organising the subjective aspects of experience; of using talk and writing and reading to explore and shape our inner lives. It covers the stories and poems – fictional and autobiographical – that children write, as well as the stories and other forms of literature that they read, and a great deal of valuable talk. It is by such means that an individual preserves his picture of the world as a world worth living in.

We are already looking at the – retrospect has become prospect by a silent change of gear. The nature of this gathering tonight, the nature of the programmes for this conference, suggests that we may well be unanimous in resisting the retrenchment, the shrunken perspectives of the "age of anxiety". But I think we have also another problem on our hands, and a more troublesome one: the threat of a polarisation in our views as to the nature of our subject, English. Let me go back to the last International Conference in this series, at York University in 1971. I think there emerged from that conference a kind of synthesis, a way of bridging the traditional gap in English teaching between a concern for language and a concern for literature. This is how a US participant wrote about it:

I have been looking for an over-riding structural principle for my

English program. At the York Conference I was exposed to the British concept of "language" and the work being done to use growth and communication models and language theories to understand and organise the sequence and type of language experiences students have. It will now be possible for me to create beneficial and appropriate language environments and situations for my students, recognising that the previously fragmented aspects of the English program are related by their common denominator – language.

A threat to that emerging synthesis was foreseen by Garth Boomer in 1973:

> If the old controversies were predicated on content versus experience and grammar versus growth, there are now indications that the 'seventies will generate polemics on the place and value of literature, and, on a wider scale, the position of English itself as a separate subject on the curriculum. It will be a pity if, as a blacklash at the 'sixties, the old dichotomy between language and literature is re-established. What seems to be required is a revaluation of the relationship between language and literature and society, along with a thorough analysis of our teaching of English literature in the universities (Bagnall, 1973: p. 75)

One approach to a synthesis is based on the distinction between using language in the role of participant and in the role of spectator. It is a notion that has been much discussed and much misunderstood. It originated as an attempt to see the relationship between the language of literature and non-literary uses of language. Or, to put it another way, are there uses of language which could be seen as brother, sister or second cousin to the mode of language usage we call "literature"?

As participants in the world's affairs we use language to get things done – to buy or sell, to inform or seek information, to persuade or instruct. But much of our daily talk does not seem *useful* in this way, does not seem concerned to get anything done. For example, when we go home in the evening, we chat or gossip about the day's events. The events we talk about are over, so we cannot be participating in them. Rather, we are reviewing, rehearsing, reconstructing, contemplating past events – and it is an obvious metaphor to say that we have taken up the role of "spectator" of those events. But we don't chat about all that has happened – we select from the day's events and that selection implies an evaluation, a highlighting of what is important or interesting or worth talking about.

The way we recount these events is even more strongly evaluative: if we feel sorry for ourselves we tell the story in such a way as to evoke sympathy on the part of our listener; if we have had a red-letter day, we try to get our listener to share our exhilaration. D. W. Harding has suggested that there is a deep-seated motive for this kind of talk: that in offering an evaluation of events we are in fact seeking the approval, or the modification, of *the way we evaluate*. Putting that more broadly, we are trying out our value systems in order to have them sanctioned by other people – not of course by anybody and everybody, but by our intimates, since close associations are built upon shared values. The "deep-seated motive" is what Harding calls "a basic social satisfaction" in knowing that we are not alone in feeling the way we do about the world (Harding, 1937; Britton, 1971).

When we participate in events, we have to evaluate in order to know how to act, but in this case, because we are concerned "to get something

done", we shall evaluate under the constraints of self-interest. As spectators we are free from those constraints and evaluate more deeply, more openly. To put it briefly, as participants we *apply* our value systems, as spectators we are concerned to *generate* values and *refine* our value systems.

When we chat about things that have happened to us, we are in the role of spectator; but so also is our listener. That is to say we may be onlookers on other people's experiences. By the same token, we are in the role of spectator when we contemplate the imagined experiences recounted in fiction (or contemplate possible or impossible future events in our day-dreaming). The language of literature has, then, a second cousin in the language we use in chatting about events, real or imagined.

All this is, I think, consistent with George Kelly's "theory of personal constructs". Kelly (1963) who takes the scientist as his model for man, sees human behaviour as essentially experimental. We draw from past experience to form hypotheses about any present encounter, test out those hypotheses and reform then in the light of what actually happens. But I think there are two aspects to our personal construct systems. There is a knowledge aspect — an organisation of the inferences from experience as to what the world is like. (If our experimental behaviour has been to treat a plate-glass door as though it were an open access, we need to amend our knowledge of what the world is like.) And there is a value aspect — an organisation of how much and in what ways we *care* (in D. H. Lawrence's words, "the way our sympathies flow and recoil").

From the knowledge aspect, we need a rational, logical, consistent set of constructs, not one riddled with incompatibilities. But it is the value aspect that makes us the sort of people we are, and our need to *be one person* is at least as pressing as the need for a consistent world representation. Empirical, scientific, philosophical modes of enquiry help us to extend and refine the knowledge aspects of our system: the value aspect requires another mode of enquiry, one that in its perfected form we call "art".

Gossip, chatting about events, reflects a concern for the value aspect, the ways in which we care. The more that gossip moves towards the forms of art, of literature, the more effectively shall we work upon that aspect. What a work of art gives us, whether as reader or writer, is *an experience of order.*

That introduces the second distinction I need in order to characterise a work of literature. First, it is, in the terms I have been describing, a piece of spectator role discourse; but, secondly, it has achieved artistic *form*, that particular and little understood mode of organisation that is common to all the arts — a unity and inner coherence of all the forms, perceptible or conceivable, that the medium offers. Gossip and the child's unshaped narrative, autobiographical or fictional, is art-like but not art. To take an extreme example, here is a piece of writing by an eleven-year-old Melbourne boy, asked by his teacher to write a story:

> Teacher wouldn't know if you broke your arm. They just pile the work up. It gets harder every day. Third term is the most boringest time I know of. The days are long and boring.
> This story is my life more than a story.
> Cause I didn't know what to write.

You could hardly have a more un-shaped narrative, yet it is a human voice, a human cry, an evaluation!

When we read and respond to a work of literature, we are, again,

working on the unity and coherence of our value systems, our feelings about the world, but we are doing so in double harness with the artist. To look at it this way is to see literature in a social context, to recognise the role of the artist as the apex of a pyramid, to recognise the importance of a readership that gives currency to the values arrived at by the most sensitive members of a society.

Speculatively, and perhaps in digression, I want to add one point. In the very process of perceiving the world, we give and find shape, pattern, order. In our talk and writing – the way we tell the stories of our lives – we give and find further shape. "*Give*" and "*find*". Yes, there is shape, pattern, order in the world irrespective of our human perceiving and interpreting. Recall the shape of a frond of fern, the "record", as Susanne Langer has said, of the slow movement of its growth. At the biological level, man shares that order; but in his behaviour, in the narrative of his actions, when we compare it with pattens of instinctual behaviour in the lesser creatures, we find randomness and even chaos rather than order. Mankind has achieved freedom in the way he acts, and that is the price.

If Susanne Langer (1967:Chapter 7) is right, a primary principle of all the arts is that they embody, in their build-up and resolution of tensions, the rhythm of every living act – a pattern characteristic of every living organism. This introduces what seems to me a fascinating speculation: we shape our lives into a kind of narrative in order more fully to possess our experiences; the shape we give in the art narrative is an attempt to recapture, or at least to approximate to, a natural order, an order found in living creatures, but something that in our actual daily lives we have lost.

Is there in all this the basis for a synthesis, a way of unifying our conception of subject English? A way of relating the learning that goes on in English lessons with the learning appropriate to the whole curriculum? (The one thing we must not do in the 'eighties is to go back to attempts to define subject English in isolation from the rest of a student's learning experiences, out of context in the curriculum as a whole. Such failure on the part of subject specialists to consider the whole curriculum has, it seems to me, left a gap that vacuous, doctrinaire theories have been only too apt to fill.)

Garth Boomer, looking at the Australian scene, foresaw a threat to the synthesis. Certainly that threat – a language/literature polarisation – is strongly in evidence in England. Our attempt to place literature in a context, to explore its relationship with other uses of language, is rejected because it is interpreted as taking literature down from its pedestal, or removing the railings that protect the sacred from the profane. Thus, Frank Whitehead (1978:17), commenting on the spectator/participant distinction, writes:

> What then can have been the motive for Britton to wrench so cavalierly from their context these two terms to form the cornerstone of his over-ambitious theorising? I suggest that the attraction was the opportunity to postulate a continuity between "gossip" and "literature" in a way which tacitly exalts the significance in human life of the former and at the same time subtly denigrates the distinctive characteristics of the latter.

The cause is taken up, though in a much more reasonable tone, in the recent publication by David Allen, *English Teaching Since 1965: How Much Growth*? Allen perceives and regrets the tendency to polarise, or so

I interpret it. Nevertheless, he echoes Whitehead in criticising my position as showing no concern for values. My retort here, particularly to Whitehead, is that he appears slow to recognise any concern for values that does not arise in the context of a work of literature. And I suspect that Allen both wishes for a synthesis and on the other hand assigns so unique a place to literature that he finds it difficult to admit any other element alongside it. While off his guard (I suggest) he writes:

> It would require a very strong appreciation of literature's own demands to resist the temptation to merge literature into a general "unity", whether that dictated by the needs of a particular pupil or the organisation of the English curriculum into themes of general importance (Allen, 1980: p. 46).

Does he see "merging literature into a general unity" as something to be aimed at, or "a temptation to be resisted"?

The synthesis he finally suggests is what, after Whitehead, he calls "art-speech", and that, as he describes it, covers the reading of literature, work in drama, and the students' own speech and writing of an art-like nature.

It is a central point in what I have said over the years that as far as *using* language is concerned, the focus in English lessons should be on language in the spectator role — and that would account for most of what goes on. It is not, however, the whole of the synthesis. Spelling that out in skeleton form:

1. Wherever *study* of language is appropriate, fostering an understanding of how it works (across all its uses), that is a part of the work in English lessons.
2. Wherever intensive practice of some language technique will feed directly into a mainstream of purposive activity (in any part of the curriculum), that — at least until the millenium arrives of an effective, universally adopted, language across the curriculum policy — is the responsibility of the English teacher.
3. As far as language *use* is concerned — speaking, listening, writing, reading — the principal area of operations in English lessons is in the Expressive to Poetic spectrum, that is, language in the role of spectator.

Since this last seems to me precisely the synthesis covered by "art-speech" as David Allen describes it, it seems unfair that he should, *en route* to this conclusion regard me as a malign influence. "Britton's achievement," he writes, "has been great; but at very great cost." (p. 67)

The threat of polarisation is certainly real — a move to set up a literature-based concept of English over and against what I have been calling the synthesis. I call this a threat because I believe that, *in practice*, such a concept tends to move towards an exclusive kind of specialism. I shall always remember L. C. Knights telling a group of teachers how he introduces students to his English Honours courses in literature. "You have to remember," he tells them, "that we are not specialists: we are simply people who have more time and better opportunities to go into what belongs to everybody." Though the proponents may not want it that way, in effect, I think it happens. I shall raise my objection in words that George Kelly (1969: p. 135) once used:

> Some of my literary colleagues leave me with the impression that "the nature of man" puts more out of my reach than within my grasp. I expect better of them. This is crucial. . . . Humanity needs to be implemented, not merely characterised and eulogised.

Art Vickers (1977), truck driver turned teacher, taught for a while in a community school in Calgary. He ran writing classes for high-school drop-outs and others with similarly limited objectives. His method was to begin every session with a ten minute free writing period, and the expressive nature of his responses to that writing usually succeeded in releasing the block set up by previous failure. In what follows he introduces the work of one of his students, Jean, aged twenty-six, separated from her husband, bringing up her child. Her ambition was to enter training as a registered nurse:

> Jean had a lot of trouble freeing herself from the habit of writing and re-writing her work in the ten minute writing period. Consequently, her work was never done. Finally, after I had spent an unsatisfactory three weeks in trying to draw her out nicely, I simply wrote on her work, 'Okay, so now you can go back to writing your own thoughts in your own words.' The very next day I received the following work:
>
> "He's rather an insignificant looking little bear. His once fluffy two-toned brown fur has been almost completely worn off by five years of cuddling and abuse. He's been sewn innumerable times with a variety of different colours of thread, to save his foam stuffing from falling out. His two little green glass eyes are on the verge of being replaced by two plastic shirt buttons. He goes by the name of Thomas, a label given as soon as his young companion could speak. He cannot be replaced, for the older and more ragged he becomes, Thomas becomes that much more important to the child whom he has helped for some years to get through a long and lonely night." (Sept. 22, 1975)

On December 1st, Jean wrote this:

> "This is for my son
>
> "I know there are times that I've let you down, and in more ways than one. Times when I should have been with you when you were with a baby-sitter because I was out on a date. The men that have not only been a hurtful part of my life, but yours too. The things you miss out on because you don't have a full-time father, like hockey and Saturday afternoon baseball games. Being a single parent is not easy for me nor is it easy for you being the child of a single parent. Sometimes when I yell at you or punish you for trivial things it's because I'm in a bad mood or I had a bad day, or I was out too late the night before or I just wish I had someone to share you with. You know that I love you more than anyone or anything, but unfortunately sometimes that isn't enough or at least I don't feel like it is. Maybe someday when you've children of your own you'll realise that my shortcomings are only those of a person trying as hard as possible to make a good life for another person. To share the good times and help you through the bad, to help you understand right from wrong isn't always a simple task. I guess what I'm trying to say is bear with me through the hard times and all the mistakes I'll make with you and my own life too because I love you and although it may not seem like it to you I am doing my very best for both of us."

We cannot call that writing "literature"; it is art-like but not art. But I believe you will feel with me that a concern for values is reflected, that

both in the teaching and in the student's writing "humanity is being implemented".

So, as we resist the polarisation, we must work on the synthesis, correct it, extend it – and for a start we might work on the misunderstandings that have arisen from misinterpretation of it. It is, finally, in the classrooms that the problems will be resolved and the synthesis achieved, and subject English will emerge to be described.

I once heard a Canadian Dean of Education lecture for an hour on "change in the elementary school"; he argued that the elementary school was so conservative an institution that change was impossible. Within his own terms, he proved his point, because he was thinking of change from outside, change from the top. But he would have found a very different picture had he looked at change from within, change by contagion from teacher to teacher.

If this were not an assembly but a more convivial occasion, I should ask you now, with "English in the 'Eighties" in mind, to raise your glasses and drink a toast to the *decade of the teacher.* As we have developed our view of learning as interactive, and that of the curriculum as negotiable; as we have recognised the dramatic effect of intentions upon performance, by teachers as well as by student; as it has become clear that teaching consists of moment-by-moment interactive behaviour, behaviour that can only spring from inner conviction – I think we are, perhaps for the first time, ready to admit that what the teacher can't do in the classroom can't be achieved by any other means. Not the "grand processional" then, not the "age of anxiety", but the "age of the classroom teacher".

No, I do not mean that nobody else matters, nobody else can help. I think there are great opportunities for people like me – in professional development, initial and in-service training, whatever you call it – provided we see that interactive learning applies to teachers as well as to those they teach; provided we see our role as helping them to theorise from their own experience, and build their own rationale and their own body of convictions. For it is when they are actively theorising from their own experience that they can, selectively, take and use other people's experiences and other people's theories.)

I see a vital role for administrators, once it is realised that they are teacher supporters rather than building superintendents or systems analysts – and teacher support means helping teachers to learn as well as helping them to teach.

Walking down Euston Road ten days ago, I was thinking about this occasion and wondering whether "the age of the classroom teacher" was altogether too optimistic an idea to be realistic. Then I saw, outside Friends' House (the Quaker Headquarters), a poster which seemed to me as I read it to be putting my thoughts into words. It contained a quotation from Rufus Jones, an American Quaker in the early years of this century: "I pin my hopes to quiet processes and small circles in which vital and transforming events take place."

Moving into the 'eighties, into rough waters with plenty of problems educational, social and political, I am not pessimistic. I pin my hopes to quiet processes and small circles in which I believe I shall see, if I'm still alive at the end, vital and transforming events taking place.

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Multicultural Education and The English Teacher

Harold Rosen
Institute of Education, University of London

This is not the kind of conference at which we take votes and pass resolutions. Nevertheless, heterogeneous as we appear to be, divergent though our views may be in our discussions, we should perhaps acknowledge that we are the kind of international coterie, pedagogical mafia, which shares, or tends to share a wide range of beliefs, aspirations and assumptions which go far beyond the teaching of English and which has fitted itself out with a rudimentary communication network along which the avant-garde whispers are amplified.

Were we to take votes, it is predictable that there would be thumping majorities against corporal punishment, racial discrimination, sexism, child abuse, pollution and the killing of whales – and there would be thumping majorities for liberty, equality and fraternity and, perhaps, macrobiotic food. Therefore, there is also little doubt about how we would vote on multicultural education. We are in favour of it, of course. That consensus dissolves rapidly when we attempt to discover what we mean by multicultural education; why it is that, compared with the resounding declarations of intent, the manifestos and slogans, the ready assent, *in practice* it remains a project, a policy, a programme rather than an informing idea permeating the life of our schools; and why those very English teachers who were the champions of the validity of the pupils' own language and experience were so tardy and reluctant to acknowledge that language and experience in our schools had to be glossed in a new and radically different way.

Let me illustrate. In a short space of time it has become an obligatory clause in the multicultural charter to say something like this:

> For the curriculum to have meaning and relevance
> for all pupils now in our schools, its content,
> emphasis and the values and assumptions contained
> must reflect the wide range of cultures, histories
> and life-styles in our multicultural society.
>
> (*The West Indian Community: Observations on the report of the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration*, London: HMSO, 1978, p. 6.

Which translated into Australian, or, more exactly, Queenslandish is:

> The curriculum (the total learning experiences provided through the school) should be multicultural in choice of content and global in perspective (*Education for a multicultural society.* A discussion paper based on the report to the Council of Directors of the Queensland Department of Education Brisbane: 1979, p. 2.

The teacher of physics to seventeen-year-olds or the teacher of arithmetic to seven-year-olds might well be dismayed at such a revision of their ancient and respected crafts, but the teacher of English, whose syllabus it is often said is quite simply life itself, should not baulk at the prospect.

It is "English for the 'Eighties" we are talking about. In the last year two books have appeared on the teaching of English. As unlike as they are, they share a sharply critical attitude to current developments in the teaching of English and a sense that they are speaking to our present condition i.e. in 1980, a year after Blair Peach, a devoted teacher of English, was killed protesting against racism. The first is D. Allen's (1980) *English teaching since 1965: How much growth?* You will search in vain in that work for a thoroughgoing response to the demand for a multicultural curriculum. In fact you will search for *any* response except for one bizarre, brief passage which occurs in a paragraph which expresses hostility to attempts to politicise English teaching:

> The final culmination of the increasing political bent is shown when the extrinsic aims come to override all other considerations; thus . . . [there follow several examples – H.R.] literature must reflect "the multicultural society in which we all live". Such inverted judgments are those of a minority, to be sure, but they do even in their extremes, have their breeding in the interplay of political sociology and English teaching. (p. 73)

For the moment let us note that having dismissed with disdain the minority view Allen – aesthete turned head-counter – does not tell us how we *should* respond to our multicultural society.

Similarly, Holbrook (1979) in *English for meaning* castigating the Bullock Report and telling us that English had lost its way, is silent about the impact on schools of thousands and thousands of children from ethnic groups with different cultures, different languages, different histories. He too has a single paragraph.

> I have visited schools where there is a rich atmosphere of creative living, even in grim areas; where young teachers work happily and enthusiastically, with negro, Japanese, Greek and Indian children, as well as children of working-class parents on the one hand and TV producers on the other . . . The best training for such work is good reading and good writing.

It would seem, then, that nothing need change. The tried recipe, good reading and good writing, makes unnecessary any concessions to multicultural education. What is this good writing and good reading which can be conjured out of processes which have nothing to do with the lived culture of the children?

But the organisers of this conference have clearly decided that it should be one of the major themes and that is itself a step forward. Having taken it, we had better admit to ourselves that the concept bristles with all those difficulties which we know so well from similar educational pronouncements ("equality of opportunity", "developing the full potential of every child" etc.) which are so broad and abstract in their formulation that in the first place they can win easy allegiance, and in the second they often turn out to be disguised versions of other less palatable meanings. The honeyed pieties of educational rhetoric are very seductive and we need to be put on our guard. Therefore I shall begin by taking a look, all too hasty, at questions of cultural differences and culture in our kind of diverse and stratified

societies. The first step, however, is to recognise how polarised views on multicultural education can be.

First a passage from *The teaching of English in multicultural Britain* (n.d.), a recent discussion document produced by our National Association for the Teaching of English:

> We have to develop a classroom culture, implicit in which is an understanding and appreciation of differences within the class and a willingness to be and to work together. . . . In building this sort of classroom culture we can create conditions, which can give pupils a vital experience of living and playing a part in a harmonious, multicultural society. (p. 4).

In spite of the fact that I believe the document as a whole will serve as a valuable initiation of discussion and action, the oasis of a harmonious classroom in the midst of the cacophony of conflict and oppression all over the world does not seem the best of images to guide our practice. However, contrast that with:

> Based upon liberal, humanistic notions of the individual experience of other cultures, multiculturalism proposes the classroom as the locus in which the cultures of racial minorities in contemporary Britain should be shared. The greater understanding achieved at this level is then meant to flow outwards to create a more harmonious society. In this account, schools are expected to affect wider social relations but are paradoxically granted autonomy from the effects of society . . . *Multiculturalism assumes that it is only the material taught that is problematic.* (My emphasis: H.R.) (Carby, H. 1980:p. 34)

Not many, as even the brief passage from the NATE document shows, wish to go much further. But the central critical point must be met, namely that schools are not autonomous institutions. However, I cite those two documents simply to show that, although the harmonious multicultural society is a reiterated theme of official and quasi-official statements, when the debate reaches classroom teachers there is division and conflict, much of which has its source in very different views of the cultures which are to be the sources of this new style education. A few comments on this.

There has been a prolonged and fruitful discussion in Britain for several decades on the nature of culture from Hoggart's *Uses of Literacy* through the work of Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall and the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, E. P. Thompson and others. Scarcely any of the discussion of multicultural education is informed by that endeavour. I cannot pursue its intricacies here. Out of that sustained endeavour let me select, as a reminder of the vast scope of the idea of culture, E. P. Thompson's way of placing it:

> Any theory of culture must include the concept of the real dialectical interaction between culture and something that is not culture. We must suppose the raw material of human experience to be at one pole, and all the infinitely complex human disciplines and systems, articulate and inarticulate, formalised in institutions or dispersed in the least formal ways, which "handle", transmit or distort the raw material, to be at the other. It is the active *process* — which is at the same time the process of social change.

First, it is unhelpful to talk about *a* culture, whatever we mean by that word. We certainly need to go beyond that mindless chauvinistic use of the term which suggests that in our complex, class-divided societies there is

something which we all share called a national (British, English, Australian, etc.) culture, a notion which can itself be used as a symbol, an ideological rallying cry with which to stir or alarm, as when we are warned in Britain of alien tidal waves which will overwhelm *our culture*. But this notion lingers on when, in the context of multicultural education, we set out induction into the "national" (or "mainstream") culture as a goal for minorities, or when we speak of children being between two cultures as though they were shuttling to and fro between two clearly defined sets of meanings, values and practices. And yet we know that in matters of language the idea is absurd. The Italian brickmakers of Bedford, as Tosi's careful socio-linguistic study has shown do not speak standard Italian: in fact they speak an Italian that is no longer the language of the younger generations in the southern Italian villages from which they originally came.

Culture then is not a monolithic entity, an integrated diversity of significant meanings and practices, nor a common core of democratically shared life. There is dominant culture and dominated culture both in the countries which have received new minority groups and in the countries from which they come. It would be more appropriate to ask: which stratum of their society do they come from and which stratum do they encounter? The EFL/ESL tradition talks of a target language. What is the target language of Jamaicans or Bengalis installed in the decaying areas of inner London: Cockney or standard English? What I am saying is the forms of cultural expression are related to power. As Raymond Williams put it in *From culture to revolution*:

> . . . if it is at all true that the creation of meanings is an activity which engages all men, then, one is bound to be shocked by any society which, in its most explicit culture, either suppresses the meanings and values of whole groups and the possibility of articulating and communicating these meanings (p. 29).

Why then should we treat culture as a universally benevolent, hygenic force dispensing life-giving power to all its consumers in all situations? If ethnic minorities are to be called upon to share in the new cultural wealth of their recently adopted land, shall we offer our own exquisite variety of sexism so thoroughly realised in all forms and at all levels of cultural activity? Or does the pluralism of multicultural education mean that with all-embracing tolerance we say, "You keep your kind of sexism and we'll keep ours"? No one can seriously believe that the intention should be to cultivate everything on the grounds that your culture is good for you, whatever it is and whatever it embraces. Schools have never taken that view of their cultural diet. The trouble has not been that they have selected but the criteria they have used for selection. Nowhere has this been more evident than in the English curriculum.

Secondly, our kind of culture is certainly not monolithic for it not only contains within itself diversity but also confrontation and hostility. A monolith is motionless stone but cultures are mobile and dynamic and forged by people who do not merely gratefully receive the established meanings of the past but also reshape and develop some and abandon some. I recollect Marx's little outburst, "the tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living". Therefore we cannot talk about minorities as though they are enclaves of a culture which truly belongs somewhere else, transplanted bits of the Caribbean, Cyprus, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, etc. which must either survive as intact

museum pieces or crumble away as eroded antiquities. Under our very eyes we can see cultures changing as they embody new orders of experience. In London the most striking example is a West Indian culture which grows out of black experience in Britain. The change is often mirrored in dramatic generational differences. A culture which finds its way into school may embody something of the grandparents' version, or of the parents' version but will certainly be the pupil's own version.

Thirdly, the difficulties abound. We often speak as though we have merely to divest ourselves of our prejudices, our so-called mono-cultural outlook and invite all cultures to cross the school threshold and they will come trooping joyously in to occupy their rightful places. As the Bullock Report puts it:

> No child should be expected to cast off the language and culture of the home as he crosses the school threshold, nor to live and act as though school and home represent two totally separate and different cultures. (p. 286)

Notice the report makes this comment in the context of what it calls "children from families of overseas origin". But it is possible following this rubric, for schools to be the arbiters of what constitutes the culture of the home, to trivialise it in paternalistic fashion, seizing upon obvious differences of food, custom and ceremonies. But the culture of the pupils arises from lived understanding and its meanings are not to be had simply for the asking. Bland and uncontroversial selections are likely to omit all these cultural practices which embody resistance and fracture the desired harmony. And behind all this is the danger of using multicultural education as a device for containment and control.

Again, there are radical qualitative differences between cultures which mean that we cannot place them in an array which makes them all in some sense equal. Whatever may or may not be done in school, cultures vary in their acceptability to the 'host' culture. We know, or think we know, the markers of culture. We know how to recognise the markers of acceptable institutionalised religions (places of worship, a priesthood, prayer, reverence). We know the markers of cultures which are permeated by literacy and institutionalised art forms – classical literature, song and dance. But oral cultures are more inaccessible because we have not developed the capacity to read them. They are likely to be partly invisible and at the same time to stir antipathy, for the oral cultures belong to the most oppressed people whose cultures have been oppressed in their country of origin. Small wonder if an attempt to incorporate them encounters ambivalence, distrust and reluctance. Schools which have ignored indigenous oral cultures are not likely to be highly responsive to oral cultures of which they have at best a tenuous awareness. The grand design of multicultural education can easily dissolve in justified reticence and suspicion summed up by the black students who wrote on the blackboard, "Sir is nosey about our language".

We, for our part, must resist the temptation to forget the effects of transplanted colonialism, colonialism come home to roost. No consideration of the language and culture of West Indian pupils can omit the central fact that it is a black culture. The experience of racism makes the new growth of black culture an oppositional culture. It is a straight lie to claim that with steel bands and calypsos in the school concert we can produce racial harmony. A concept of education which does not look racism in the eye is

a mockery, and what is more, is an obstacle to deepening our own understanding.

These are some, but by no means all, of the reasons why the multicultural enterprise needs closer scrutiny and why it calls for much more than a vote for pluralism. This is not an excuse for inertia or despair but only a sober appraisal of the fact that our national school systems have been special filtering devices transmitting particular versions of culture. It is the attempt to change that process which makes multicultural education a daunting enterprise and understandably makes honest sceptics out of those who have worked most closely with minority groups. A French colleague, Zavier Couillard, puts these matters better than I have done. Preferring the word intercultural to multicultural, he warns against the schools "teaching" cultures to children in the typical academic manner so that the very bearers of these cultures cannot recognise themselves, and also against the dangers of "folklorisation", the ransacking of cultures under the voyeristic gaze of the dominant (I winced).

Intercultural education, by contrast, must be based on the active expression and exploration by the pupils of their sense of their lives in the here and now, of their intercultural experience. In the absence of real equality we need to give scope to the expression of tension and conflict not to muffle its discordant and strident notes.

Let me compress in one citation what I have been saying. How would this young girl's poem fit into most of the multicultural manifestoes we have read in the last few years?

CRY FOR ME
Cry for me
You son-of-a-bitch white man.
Cry for your brother who has
No work
No love
No mother
No father
No nothing.

Cry for me.
While you sit on your big white ass
In a nice warm room
I walk the cold streets,
Hunger burning in my belly
No warmth
No comfort
No nothing.

Cry for me
You white bastard
You took my identity
SHIT . . . You don't even know what I'm talking about!

Now you're going to lock me away
In some dark place for many years.
Can't you even shed one God-damn tear?

You are the ones who are dumb.
You are the ones who make us all go mad.
Can't you find it in your heart to cry a little?
Why don't you leave us alone?
Can't you see what you have done to us?
Cry nah!

Sandra Agard
(from *Talking Blues* Centerprise, 1976)

The Teaching of English

With that context we can turn now to the pupils in the English class, the English teacher and the teaching of English. The invisible foundation stone for the teaching of English has inscribed upon it these articles of faith:

1. English is the mother tongue of our pupils.
2. The task of the teacher is to make pupils literate in that mother tongue.
3. The pupils' use of the mother tongue must be extended or improved or modified because the spontaneous use of language in the community could not achieve this goal.

Mother tongue English was always a fiction but a fiction with considerable credibility for a long time. That fiction has slowly but surely been torn apart in the last twenty to twenty-five years as the demographic processes, with which you are all familiar, expressed themselves in the mother tongue classroom – speakers for whom English was a second or perhaps third language, for whom English was a first language but who spoke another, speakers whose dialect or language was a Creole or somewhere on the Creole continuum or who spoke a UK vernacular but could switch into a new form of Creole. Linguistic diversity, some of it audible, some of it inaudible, was the most manifest expression of cultural diversity.

The credible fiction of mother tongue teaching which preceded this linguistic diversity is worth returning to, if only because the fierce exchanges we hear now centre on issues which were all there long before the post-war immigrations began, albeit unrecognised, or stifled, or in embryonic form. They are now writ large, so large that almost everyone must make some kind of response. Mass education in 19th century Europe was never designed to teach the mother tongue (there are remarkable exceptions like Norway). Indeed in some instances it involved the explicit suppression of mother tongues (Catalan, Breton, Welsh, Gaelic, etc.), patois and vernaculars of all kinds. The British version was an attempt to impose standard English which was as like the English vernacular as consomme is to pea-soup.

So we have had a century of rich experience of *refusing* to teach the mother tongue and made no bones about it. Even the Newbolt Report of 1921, that extraordinary monument to claims for *the* central place in the curriculum to be occupied by English, said without blinking:

> The great difficulty of teachers in elementary schools in many districts is that they have to fight against the powerful influence of evil powers of speech contracted in home and street. The teachers' struggle is thus not with ignorance but with perverted power (p. 59).

It called for systematic training in the speaking of standard English and demanded that the elementary school should "teach all its pupils who either speak a definite dialect or whose speech is disfigured by vulgarisms,

to speak standard English, and to speak it clearly, and with expression" (p. 65). No nonsense about mother tongue there. Indeed, with a naive linguistic determinism the authors believed that the promotion of one favoured kind of English would resolve all class differences. (The word is harmony again!) Half a century later there were voices insisting that the only language goal of education for immigrants was mastery of English to ensure their peaceful and rapid integration.

As the great waves of post-war immigration brought new pupils into the classrooms of teachers of English they were caught in a paradoxical posture. On the one hand it caught them at the very moment when they were in the midst of sharp and raging controversy about working class language and culture. (Notice that the British form of this debate was concerned with the working class not, as in the US, "the poor", and with the vernaculars of the majority not Black English). On the other hand, while some were struggling to analyse popular speech and the submerged cultural legacy, they were confronted with dramatically novel linguistic-cultural phenomena which they were ill-equipped, perhaps reluctant, to understand. That these two matters were in essence different facets of the same question took a long time to emerge, if indeed it has yet emerged. To add to my earlier formulation, language and cultural diversity is language and class writ large.

For much more than a decade in the world of English teaching we were reluctant to engage fully with these questions and, as I indicated at the outset, some are so still. We do not emerge honourably from that refusal. It expressed itself plausibly in terms of a division of labour. Those with special expertise in English as a second language or West Indian dialects should be left to do their work and deliver their successfully converted pupils to us. Yet the signs were there to be read. In very guarded phrasing the Bullock Report spoke of immigrant families facing grave problems and "in many respects (they) resemble some of the indigenous families in the same inner city area".

Earlier official documents had more explicitly spoken of linguistic deficit in immigrant children. Many English teachers were familiar with the long argument about elaborated and restricted codes but most would have been unaware that these terms were haunting the discussion of so-called immigrant languages. The language of West Indian children was creating special difficulties. They were, so to speak, compounding their felony. The restricted code they brought with them was merging with the restricted code of the inner city. Jamaican plus Cockney was producing a new kind of hyper-deficit. Yet the truth was that the really transforming encounter was with the experience of being assigned a special role in the economy and being the target of the dominant ideology: it was out of this encounter that a new culture and a new dialect grew, a culture and language of resistance — ("we speak a livalect not a dialect", they say) — already embodied in a flourishing literature.

English teachers, ill-equipped as most were, have had to start on the arduous business of reshaping their programmes in the light of an adaptation of their principles. I say ill-equipped since we know only too well that just as their formation, basically literary-critical, had not prepared them for the urban comprehensive school so had its essentially mono-lingual Englishness not prepared them for linguistic-cultural diversity. As I have tried to indicate, in other ways some of them were prepared. They needed only to

rotate some of their basic principles to engage with the new situation.

That, I think, was more or less how we stood in the English Department of the University of London Institute of Education when we embarked on a small scale survey of linguistic diversity in inner-London schools. The we, it should be said, included some of our Australian colleagues studying with us at the time, in particular John Snodgrass. I will spare you the history and most of findings of that research (Rosen & Burgess, 1980) but I would like to select one feature of it and let it ripple outwards to illustrate some of the complexities which confront us all.

I have selected the language of West Indian pupils as we awkwardly call them in our schools. I might easily have chosen the cluster of pre-occupations around "inter-language" or the disputes about "semi-lingualism" starting with a text like this by a boy whose mother tongue is Cantonese.

> Once a time there was a man, He was draw very well and keep the Old thing but there are No people to buy because they are so pool. (. . . and so on.)

I prefer to start with West Indian pupils because in several senses they are the most *visible* minority. (It is an interesting fact that the Irish, who are by far and away our largest minority, rarely figure in discussions of multicultural education in spite of their long and violent relationship with British life and despite the fact that we now have some excellent socio-linguistic studies of their speech.)

The case of West Indian speech stands out for several reasons:

1. West Indians are the focus of almost neurotic anxiety in political and educational circles. As I write this paper I read in *The Times* that the government is considering a proposal to carry out national testing of West Indian children's performance in school.
2. It is nearly impossible to say exactly what West Indian speech in Britain is.
3. There has been a unique and dramatic development in West Indian speech which can only be understood in terms of Halliday's "anti-language", oppositional language.
4. It is the perfect example of the dangers of taking a monolithic view of language and culture.
5. It demonstrates the disastrous limitations of looking at culture as something "over there" rather than a new but connected growth "over here".

In other words West Indian language presents us a perfect instance of the kind of new understanding required of English teachers.

Let's start with the apparently straightforward question we asked ourselves in undertaking our survey, "What do our West Indian pupils speak?" In the first place many of them speak an English which is no different from the language of white Londoners (and we can complicate life by asking, "What do *they* speak?"). But that is not true of most of them who have what Gumperz (1968) calls "fluid repertoires" that is "when there are transitions between adjoining vernaculars or when one speech style merges into another in such a way that it is difficult to draw clear borderlines." That is a familiar enough concept in socio-linguistics and in personal experience, often taking the form of a continuum from a vernacular dialect to standard. Individual speakers are located on the continuum and slide along it in various ways and to differing extents. But West Indian speech in London presents a much more complex picture for two reasons.

Firstly, it emerges from the interaction of two quite different continua. There is the Creole continuum (ranging from one of the West Indian Creoles to a West Indian standard). And there is the London continuum (ranging from a full Cockney to standard British English). These two continua are in dynamic interaction. Thus the range of possibilities is enormous. We have tried to systematise these in our report (Rosen and Burgess, 1980: pp. 34-36, 65-72). But the central fact is that most West Indian pupils now speak like working class Londoners, very roughly 95 per cent of them, but almost all display some features of black dialect and these features will be intensified in certain contexts.

This might suggest that we are making a fuss about nothing or at any rate assuming that what, to a socio-linguist is a fascinating set of phenomena, must ipso facto be equally compelling for a teacher. But we shall have to ask when and why the slide towards the Creole end of the continuum takes place and what this signifies. And then inevitably we have to take a stand on so-called dialect "interference" and the claims that it affects learning to read and infects written composition.

However, the second reason for selecting West Indian language for attention is much more important, since it is not only dramatic by any standards but also provides the starkest and most unambiguous example of the relationship between language and identity and of the response to our unharmonious multicultural society. I must put it very briefly. The West Indian community in London has developed its own Creole, basically Jamaican but different from it. It exerts a centripetal force on black Londoners especially teenagers in our schools who learn to speak this dialect (not, you should notice, their first language) with a speed and success which any teacher of French or, for that matter, would-be teachers of standard English would envy. Nobody, as far as we know, predicted the emergence of this dialect in the black community much less the eagerness with which black youngsters would undertake learning it. What a remarkable thing! The supposed carriers of linguistic deficit mastering without benefit of schools or the normal processes of infant language acquisition a second dialect into which they can switch at will. Their Cockney-speaking counterparts can do no such thing.

It is worth mentioning at this point that we asked a question in our survey which ran like this: Would you welcome the opportunity to read and write sometimes in your dialect, out of interest in it? The question itself would have seemed to some people nothing short of scandalous. In the event 26 per cent of the bi-dialectal pupils (overwhelmingly West Indian in origin) said, "Yes". The figure is the more remarkable if we bear in mind:

1. It would be unrealistic to many pupils for whom such a possibility did not exist.
2. Our sample consisted of first year secondary pupils, 11/12 years of age, who had not reached the age when black identity really asserts itself.

What are we to make of this? We must surely go beyond the now often expressed view that all dialects are equal and assert that functionally the speaking of dialects may constitute different kinds of acts for different speakers. There is now a considerable body of work which demonstrates that there is no foundation to the assertion that speakers of "low status varieties" inevitably succumb to the pressures of standardisation. The latest study of this kind, of somewhat unusual design (Milroy, 1980), an

investigation of the vernacular speech in Belfast, came to the conclusion that it is essentially linked to *loyalty* and *solidarity* and it is often perceived by its speakers as opposed to institutionalised values. The harmony view of culture and language cannot accommodate *that* very easily.

One of Halliday's (1980) most remarkable and ambitiously speculative papers discusses what he calls "anti-languages". He begins with an examination of prison language and criminals' language and argues that they are an attempt to establish an alternative social reality. He proceeds to the proposal that they throw some light on dialects which can be seen in some sense as anti-language.

> A non-standard dialect that is consciously used for strategic purposes, defensively to maintain a particular social reality or offensively for resistance and protest, lies further in the direction of anti-language; this is what we know as "ghetto language" . . . A social dialect is the embodiment of a widely but distinctly different world view – one which is therefore potentially threatening, if it does not coincide with one's own (p. 179).

How well this applies to black dialect in London! The act of talking black, of making a sharp discontinuity between your first dialect and this second one, code-switching, as we say, is to go to the offensive, perhaps in both senses. To use black dialect in this way is to declare an opposition.

I have come a long way round. By detaching one strand from the huge linguistic diversity in our classrooms it may seem that I am suggesting an impossible task for the English teacher. Not impossible but very demanding, delicate and exploratory. In inner city schools what most pupils share is frustration and often anger, expressed, as we know, in anything from surliness to overt rebelliousness. They are not to be placated by token gestures towards their language or attempts to confiscate and annexe it. It will not be enough to allow them to use their dialect in school, they will need to be convinced that they can use it to say the most important things they have to say in writing as well as speech.

I believe the best English teaching in recent years has been an attempt to tear down all those barriers which made the pupils invisible – invisible to themselves, to each other and ultimately the world; an attempt to call a halt to all those verbal exchanges in English classrooms in which what was *not* said was more important than what was said. Until now it has been a minority attempt but one of enormous significance. As Chris Searle discovered as far back as the publication of his pupils' fierce poems, *Stepney Words*, when the attempt is made the sparks fly. To broaden that attempt to include all the minority children in our schools must mean that there will be sparks galore. Are we prepared for that?

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English Teaching and the Multicultural Environment

Abram L. Mawasha
University of the North, South Africa

There is always a danger for any professional group to turn what should be into what is, to assume that a proper theoretical position will be accepted by all. In a consciousness of what is right, the experts may overlook the complexity of a situation. And nowhere is this danger more likely than in the consideration of a second language in a multicultural environment. Frequently the outlook of the community can be quite different from that of the teaching profession, and unless we understand these differences we duly increase the range of difficulties that face us. From our experiences in South Africa I would like to explore some of the factors which motivate a community to hold a non-active language – in this case English – in high regard.

In terms of Act. No. 32 of 1961, Section 108, English and Afrikaans have been constitutionally identified as the country's official languages rated on a footing of equality, possessing and enjoying equal freedom, rights and privileges. With the promulgation of the black States Constitution Act of 1971, territories designated as black homelands were constitutionally empowered to "elevate" the main African language spoken in the given territory to the status of an official language alongside English and Afrikaans.

Afrikaans is used as a medium of teaching and learning in Afrikaans medium schools and English in English medium schools. Both languages are taught at communications level in these schools. In this way both main white groups in the country enjoy the satisfaction of protecting their cultural bias through the predominant use of their languages on their school, college or university campuses while at the same time maintaining dialogue country-wide by learning each other's language at communications level.

Black South Africans on the other hand learn and teach through the medium of English from the sixth year of schooling through higher primary, secondary, college and university. Over and above this black children learn English, Afrikaans and their mother-tongue/family language. State effort at encouraging the use of English and Afrikaans as joint media of instruction on a fifty-fifty basis at primary and secondary school levels met with disfavour from black South Africans and the effort was dropped. The use of African languages as media of instruction stipulated in the Bantu Education Act of 1953 also met with disfavour. Teachers' associations, parents committees and community leaders would have African languages as media of education only up to the end of the lower primary school to be replaced by English from the higher primary school upward.

There are four main factors that have contributed to the entrenched position that English held and still holds in the education of black South Africans.

Linguistic Factors

The 19 million or so black South Africans, although of common African cultural ancestry, speak a variety of languages (and within these languages a variety of dialects), most of which are not mutually intelligible.

As long as the black people of South Africa operated within the confines of their particular language/tribal groups, their individual indigenous languages were quite adequate for the transmission of cultural values from one generation to another and for day-to-day communication at formal and informal levels. But as soon as western culture with its brand of social, religious, political, economic and educational development came onto the scene, bringing with it detribalisation, urbanisation, industrialisation and cross-cultural movements, the traditional life-style of the black people was drastically changed and the groups' tribal languages became inadequate to carry-out communication across the resultant linguistic frontiers. The need for a common language became practically imperative.

Although Afrikaans often serves as such a common language, socio-politico-historical factors have always tipped the scale in favour of English. As it is today, English is the preferred medium of communication across the broad spectrum of the black South African elite, especially the educated and the urbanised.

This heavy linguistic tilt towards English has engendered certain beliefs bearing on the education of black South Africans within the context of multicultural/multilingual South Africa. First among these is the contention that the use of African languages (or one of the country's main African languages) – in lieu of English – as a medium of instruction and learning will inevitably lower the standard of education and training of black South Africans. When in 1953 the Bantu Education Act was promulgated providing, among other things, for the use of African languages as media of instruction and learning, there was an immediate reaction from black parents, especially the intelligentsia, that the stipulation was a political manoeuvre calculated to isolate the education of black South Africans from the mainstream of education for whites with the express purpose of educationally disadvantaging the former and so overall retarding their social, political and economic development. The pedagogical validity of this fear is not important for purposes of this paper; what is important is the confidence that a people can have in the potency of a given non-mother tongue (in this case English among black South Africans) as an instrument for acquiring, storing and transmitting knowledge.

A second belief postulates that an English Higher Grade (EL1) programme is not only worthier to pursue than English Standard Grade (EL2) in terms of prestige and communicative effectiveness, but is also a safety check on any effort by the educational authorities to channel the black South African into linguistic (and educational) programmes inferior to those prepared for his white compatriot. Accordingly, English programmes, especially from secondary school onwards were – and still are – in the main considered by many black intelligentsia incomplete without English classics as reading and study components. Until quite recently, many

educated black South Africans were more familiar with Dickens, Hardy, Austen, Shakespeare, Shaw and so forth than with say Mphahlele, Abrahams, Achebe, Totuola, and so forth.

There is no doubt that it was mainly as a result of these beliefs that ESL and TESL programmes in the Republic of South Africa never received the attention they deserved whether from methodologists or material writers. This has led to an anomalous situation where the majority of South Africans received – and still receive – the bulk of their education and training in ESL while this very area received scant attention.

The situation is, however, changing: English material by black African writers is being prescribed for study at secondary, college and university levels. ESL material is now being prepared for use in black schools. At English medium universities, TESL programmes at postgraduate levels have just been instituted for ESL teachers.

In addition, independent organisations such as the English Academy of Southern Africa, South African Council for English Education, South African Association for Language Teaching working in collaboration with the British Council are engaged in a vigorous effort to up-grade black teachers of English by offering support material and in-service training in ESL and TESL.

The 'eighties may well see the development of strong ESL and TESL programmes similar to those offered in, say, United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada and those countries where the nature of the citizenry is such that it calls for multicultural and multilingual education and training. English programmes in black schools, colleges and universities will, while not excluding the English classics, incorporate English works by black writers both from within the Republic and from elsewhere in Africa. But the general mood among black South Africans as they enter the 'eighties is such that English will remain the main language of instruction and learning in schools, colleges and universities.

Historical Factors

The preference for English (especially among black, coloured and Asiatic South Africans) as a common language used to achieve dialogue within multicultural and multilingual South Africa, is partly – perhaps largely – historical. Literary education among black South Africans started as anywhere else in Africa with the arrival of the Christian missionaries. The pioneer missionary-teachers were well aware of the fact that literary education was the most powerful instrument in the propagation of the Christian religion and the western concept of education both of which were spread through the length and breadth of Africa.

In keeping with the Protestant belief to which many of the missionary societies belonged, some study of African languages was made, the Bible and other religious materials were translated into certain indigenous languages such as Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho, Luvhenda, Xitsonga, Zulu and Xhosa. Some elementary reading material in these languages were also produced to initiate education. But since the majority of the missionary-teachers were English-speaking, and the bulk of the learning material – both in language *per se* and in content subjects – was in English, the black converts had to learn English in order to cope with this new education.

This was the beginning of it all. The language English and the concept

"enlightenment" – that is being converted to Christianity and being schooled according to the western education model – became synonymous. Accordingly black teachers and parents insisted on English both as a language and as a medium of teaching and learning from the very early stages of schooling.

The black South Africans had realised (or believed) that the only way to cope with the "new world" that the colonial conqueror was creating out of their traditional one was through literary education which was enshrined mainly in English; for that reason there was no way of persuading them later on that learning can also take place through the indigenous languages or some other language other than English.

These historical factors explain in the main the apparent incongruity in the strife of black South Africans against the paramountcy of African languages in their teaching and learning programmes even at the time when so much is being said about Africanisation and black consciousness. (It is interesting to note that the Afrikaaner on the other hand has succeeded in giving Afrikaans paramountcy in the Afrikaans medium schools.)

Prestige Factor

Proficiency in English *per se* has a prestige factor among many black South Africans. This is so because English is generally associated with higher socio-economic status. It is the common social language of the educated and the economically better-off.

Understandably therefore, stilted forms of English are reported to be quite common in many black classrooms. In such cases the term "teacher's language" has been used to describe this form of English (Eiselen, W. W., 1969: p. 6).

A few extracts from novels written by black writers in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa will suffice to illustrate the prestigious status that English enjoyed and in the main still does among Black people in Africa as a whole. In a short story by Richard Rive there is the following description which highlights the prestigious nature of English among South African blacks:

> She heard of Molly and Miena and Sophia and a sophisticated Charmaine who always spoke English . . . Charmaine. (Quoted by Ezekiel Mphahlele, 1980.)

And from elsewhere in Africa, the Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe (1980: p. 153) describes the following scene in which English evokes great admiration from listeners. He writes:

> The two policemen conferred in the Whiteman's tongue (English) to the great admiration of the villagers.

Again by the same writer (1979: p. 29),

> Needless to say, this address (in English) was repeatedly interrupted by cheers and clapping of hands. What a sharp young man their Secretary was, all said. He deserved to go to England himself. He wrote the kind of English they admired if not understood: the kind that filled the mouth like the proverbial dry meat.
>
> Obi's English on the other hand was most unimpressive. He spoke 'is' and 'was'.

Although it will be difficult to argue away the status of English in black South Africa and elsewhere in Africa, it would appear that the language's strong position is mainly due to its handiness or utility as an international

medium of communication and as a language in which the bulk of the teaching and learning material is to be had for many Africans throughout Anglophone Africa.

Political Factors

The influence of the British colonial expansion into Africa was, like any other conquest, followed by the introduction of the English language and culture in all spheres of life. South Africa as one of the colonies of Britain experienced this influence. We cite a few examples to illustrate this.

In 1841 the use of English as "the colloquial language of the school" was made a condition upon which allowances were granted from the Colonial Treasury to mission and other schools not on government establishment. In 1856 the British Colonial Secretary issued an instruction to Sir Henry Pottinger, then Governor of the Cape Colony to the effect that:

> Every attempt to reduce the Kaffir tongue to writing as a medium of instruction should be carefully avoided and discouraged.
>
> (Kgware, W. M., 1977.)

In 1917 a Chief Inspector of Education, Dr. C. T. Loram (1917: pp. 67-68) wrote as follows:

> Apart from sentiment, there is no reason for wishing the Bantu languages to survive. They have served their purpose. They are not capable of expressing the new ideas which the European civilisation has brought to the country. They are hopelessly clumsy and inadequate on the mathematical and scientific sides.

In 1930 E. H. Brookes (1930: pp. 67-68) argued that English formed a link between Africa and the world and that it contained the complex heritage of the European civilisation which was to be preserved and disseminated in Africa.

Clearly here we have political pressure being used to give English an advantage over the other languages.

In the future I think we may see the following developments: First, English will possibly continue to function as a handy *lingua franca*, an international medium of communication, and a medium of teaching and learning for black South Africans for many years to come. But literature by black writers writing in English will progressively gain ascendancy over the traditional English classics in English programmes in black Schools, colleges and universities. The English classics, however, will be retained as a component of the programmes for purposes of a wider literary sweep of the culture of the English.

Secondly, black ESL materials writers will be called upon to prepare material for use in black schools, colleges and universities on the understanding that their intimate knowledge with peculiar linguistic problems in black settings will be used to advantage. For a start, such black materials writers will work with more experienced English-speaking writers who will assist with their expertise and mother-tongue linguistic competence.

Finally, TESL programmes, which are still in their infant stages, will continue to grow with the help of interested parties such as the English Academy of Southern Africa, South African Council for English Education, the British Council and English medium colleges and universities. Although these programmes will be broadly similar to those offered in, say the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada, they will have a distinct character which will make them more relevant to local conditions. Above

all they will take into account prevailing attitudes to English in the community. Hopefully, too, those providing such programmes will also see as their responsibility the need to encourage enlightened attitudes to all languages.

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"You Always End Up With Conflict": An Account of Constraints in Teaching Written Composition

C. T. Patrick Diamond
Faculty of Education, University of Queensland

Teaching can be depicted as a process which almost inevitably involves paradox and dilemma since most of the research strongly confirms the existence of inconsistencies between what teachers want to do and what they actually do. For example, Collis (1967), Charters and Jones (1973), and Hamilton (1973) report that teachers revert to an almost common method of presentation in the classroom, despite initial differences in intentions. Similarly, after 250 classrooms in more than 100 American schools had been visited, Goodlad (1968: p. 2) concluded that it is quite erroneous to assume substantial implementation of teachers' own ideas and preferred practices. As teachers go busily about their daily chores, the disparity is enormous. Gallo (1968), Barker-Lunn (1970) and Barnes (1976, personal communication) have found or expect almost no link between these different levels of reality. Sharp and Green (1975), Gracey (1972), Mehan (1974), Lortie (1975), Talbert (1976) and Berlak and Berlak (1976) agree that there are inconsistencies between the ideal and the real; that is, between the paradigmatic and the pragmatic components of teaching.

Teachers themselves agree that this kind of second best accords with their experience and that too little of what they want ever seems to eventuate. The usual explanation is that "they won't let me!", where the interfering "they" takes the form of the education system and its officers, the local school administration and even the current student body. As Combs (1979: pp. 209-210) observes, this may be a handy excuse and one that even offers advantages. Instead of blaming themselves for the discrepancy and the frustration, teachers can safely see themselves as thwarted persons capable of great things if only they were allowed to do so. The problem to be solved is whether or not there really is an obstructionist "they". Are teachers really kept in chains by their administrators?

To move towards obtaining some concrete evidence on this critical matter I designed a ranking instrument to index the perceptions of the determinants of the major components of the year ten English curriculum. Ninety-three teachers of year ten English from twenty-two large government high schools in Queensland agreed to participate in the study. In order to corroborate the findings, a rational and empirically derived sample of fifteen demonstrably representative teachers were drawn from nine of the high schools.

The field of forces governing the actions of teachers can be conceptualised in terms of four levels of reality or sets of data flowing successively away from the teachers and towards the students. At Level I teaching is seen as an intellectual and cognitive activity at least in its origins. What

goes on in the heads of teachers is held to be a critical antecedent of what they do. Level II is concerned with teachers' own approval of their constructs since, in order to act upon constructs, teachers must not only hold them, they must also be committed to them.

Level III deals with the contexts provided by the school and by the class. Although teachers are depicted as active constructors of their world of teaching writing, account has to be taken of "them" as external factors that allegedly have a heavy influence on actual construct implementation. Contextual features that may constrain or even support such implementation include the degree of curricular autonomy the teachers enjoy and the composition of their particular student body. Some teachers may adapt their constructs according to the sex, age, ability, personality and home background of their class. This third level is traditionally accepted as the setting in which a filtration or screening process takes place. It is reasoned that somewhere between the initial ideas and their expression in teaching strategies in the classroom, a number of obstacles or barriers may exist which block the implementation of the teachers' intentions.

Level IV offers the convergence of a number of perspectives on classroom events. Students' perceptions of teachers' learning environments are examined in order to discover whether or not the teachers are able to establish classroom climates consistent with their previously recognised and endorsed constructs. Teachers' constructs are also investigated to see which of them are able to be communicated to pupils as having been actually translated into appropriate teaching strategies. It goes almost without saying that the teachers' reported behaviours may not follow automatically from the previous levels. Level IV may include behaviours that are contrary to the teachers' declared and endorsed constructs or intentions since they may be swamped by the "teaching imperative" (Adams, 1970: p. 58) proclaimed by the immediate demands of the classroom. Finally at Level IV I provide a traditional classroom interaction analysis of one of each of the representative fifteen teachers' writing lessons, together with a more global case record of their pedagogy in action (see Diamond, 1979a, for the summarising tables and figures).

At Level II, the representative or centroid teachers' total commitment to growth scores provided preliminary evidence as to whether or not they went the further step and endorsed the personal construct systems that they were construed to use. The higher the score, the more progressive and the less traditional their endorsements were considered to be. A commitment to the skills-based pedagogy was taken as being indicated by a score that was more than half a standard deviation below the mean, while a growth-centred commitment was shown by a score that was more than half a standard deviation above the mean. Consequently, a transitional commitment was indexed by the remaining range of scores and over 46 per cent of the centroid teachers appeared to share such a commitment. By this means, four teachers were confirmed in their transitional ideology, three others in their teaching for growth approach and one in her skills-based pedagogy. There was some discontinuity, however, for the remaining seven teachers. Compared to their classification at Level I in terms of their organising or superordinate constructs, the commitment to growth scores of three other teachers at Level II appeared to be depressed, while those of the remaining four teachers seemed inflated or biased upwards. The three over-arching perspectives are described in Diamond (1979b).

If the commitment to growth scores showed in an initial way whether or not the teachers' superordinate constructs were being implemented across the interface of Levels I and II, their total systems of perceived nuclear constructs were accepted as having been endorsed if the teachers subscribed to at least half of them. A three point scale indicated strong agreement through to strong disagreement for each item which sampled their constructs in terms of the twenty ideas shared by the original ninety-three teachers.

Since all except one of the teachers endorsed at least half of the nuclear constructs that they perceived, the construct systems of fourteen teachers were interpreted as having been appropriately endorsed. However, totally consistent implementation of constructs does not necessarily follow even congruent endorsement since associated activity can be complicated, as Becker (1960: pp. 36-37) notes, by the operation of administrative arrangements (Level III) and of individual adjustment to social positions (Level IV). Though constraint would be found to be very rare at Level III, over time it may prove less so. In the first instance, the resolute growth-oriented teacher may seek eventual promotion to Deputy Principal in order perhaps to advocate his commitment but the school Principal and Staff inspectors may use their ability to control and drill a class as an increasingly important criterion of advancement. Secondly, an idealist may find the burden of preparation and the emotional expense too great to be maintained and seek instead, the support of colleagues who are more committed to a teacher-survival, pupil-skills approach. Becker (1969: p. 38) states that commitments which are not supported by such "side bets" lack power, crumple in the face of opposition and fade away to be replaced. A further problem is that people often have conflicting commitments as do eight of the nine teachers who have been described as holding a transitional point of view.

When additional information was sought for the only teacher whose constructs were obstructed at Level II, the ratio of her endorsement as against her disapproval of skills-based constructs was shown as 1:1 and that for the growth-oriented constructs as 2:3. The commitments of this teacher appeared very guarded and may have reflected an extremely neutral or even a sceptical point of view. This verifies her having previously been typed as a transitional teacher on the basis of how she organised her pedagogical constructs.

At Level III, when the ninety-three teachers ranked the Board of Secondary School Studies, Moderators, Principal and Deputy Principal, subject master, groups of teachers, and individual teachers in order of importance from the least to the greatest influence in each of four areas (content, materials, teaching methods and evaluation), groups of teachers were seen as wielding the most powerful and consistent influence. Only the individual teacher beat them into second place in relation to classroom teaching methods. On the other hand, the Board, its Moderators and the School Administrators were perceived as being of least importance in all four areas. The subject master was invariably ranked third in influence. The teachers in the twenty-two high schools perceived that they had a great deal of autonomy in making decisions about the English curriculum. As the Campbell study (1976) also found, teams of teachers are enjoying an independence in curricular matters. This may be particularly so in Queensland where the English syllabus is in no way prescriptive and the Board is not seen as all powerful.

The relative influence of the Board, Moderators, Principal and Deputy Principal, subject master, groups of teachers and individual teachers, as perceived by grade ten English teachers from within each of the nine schools from which the representative or centroid teachers were drawn, produced rankings which closely resembled those reported above for the entire sample of ninety-three teachers. As before, groups of teachers and the individual classroom teacher were seen as being most influential in affecting English curricular decisions in all four areas, although the role of the subject master was more salient than previously, and particularly so in relation to evaluation. Though three of the centroid teachers were subject masters themselves, it was clear that individual teachers were still free within their schools to choose those personal teaching strategies which were calculated to implement their ascribed and endorsed constructions of writing. This freedom from constraint even applied to two teachers whose schools produced relatively lower scores in regard to teacher autonomy. The first teacher felt somewhat unsure of her own degree of methodological autonomy since she had just "taken up the reins again" after a period of child-rearing, while the second reported having difficulty in separating individual classroom decisions from his responsibilities as the newly appointed subject master.

None of the variables investigated at this stage of Level III would have prevented the teachers from basing their teaching behaviours on their inferred and endorsed constructs. The obstructionist "they" did not materialise. At the curriculum decision-making stage of Level III, the centroid teachers were able to select whatever teaching strategies they wished to design in order to implement their own perceived and endorsed constructions of writing.

While administrative superiors were not apparently important obstructions to teacher activity, their actual effects may still prove to be quite complex. Although the present study has shown that teachers were not overly constrained in relation to classroom practices, and Lortie (1969) argues that this represents the typical outcome of negotiation between teachers and administrators, there may be still a clear distinction between the administrative and instructional areas of teaching. When executive dominance is manifest in the former zone, it can be more muted in the latter. One teacher reports:

> There's no hindrance or interruptions at administrative levels, really. Anything that the English Department want to do they can. While there's no positive help, there's no obstruction except from the community . . . I think my biggest problem as a teacher is the lack of communication between this school and the majority 7f parents;

and another teacher agrees that this is the state of affairs:

> I get very little flak except very occasionally from some parents who think we don't cover enough work because we "just" talk. Otherwise, I'm almost totally free to do what I want.

However, while Holt and Uhlenberg (1979: p. 66) also have found that school districts do not prevent teachers using methods they deem appropriate to their own aims and ideas, neither do they provide a great deal of special support for teachers' programs.

At Level III, from conversations with the centroid teachers, I found that they characterised their classes also in terms of constraint, describing their students by reference to stream, sex, ability, "good" or "bad" behaviour

and the likelihood of their staying beyond the legal school leaving age. Five teachers taught what were seen as top academic classes, while another four worked with lower stream classes. The class taken by a tenth teacher was a composite that existed only for English, while the classes taught by three of the four above teachers were the least able, with the last grouping of students pursuing a specially modified program.

One of these four teachers confronted an all boy's class, the only single sex class in the centroid teacher sample, and another of them also reported severe behaviour problems. This teacher's deprived and hostile class proved to be the weakest academically, as well as the most rebellious of all the groups of teenagers. They baited their teacher by sniggering, looking out the window, coughing, openly eating lollies and even calling out during the writing period: "Miss I'm not doing it!" In addition, two of the girls had been reported by the school authorities to Juvenile Aid and during a lesson one boy casually blew his nose over a desk to the admiration or amusement of his neighbours. Finally, these two teachers expected that almost all of their students would leave school at the end of Grade ten, if not before. In marked contrast, the majority of the students in the five academic classes planned to return for grade eleven. Both groups of teachers (1977, personal communications) have since confirmed that, in the main, their students did leave or remain on at school as had been anticipated.

At Level III, the composition of the teachers' classes had a greater effect on the translation of their constructs into action than did administrators. For example, two teachers agreed that teachers have to adapt to the classes that they have, while another teacher states that:

> with some classes I wouldn't be game to try the innovative approaches that I'd like to – they'd "rabble". They're generally not interested in doing anything . . . A lot of the problems arise from their family backgrounds.

Together with a fourth teacher, he describes a contrasting class that enhances the process of consistent construct implementation rather than constraining it:

Teacher: I've got a grade ten class that's beautiful! I can try out anything I like, particularly in writing.

Teacher: I say that we're going to extend this writing for homework and they're really pleased. They're madly keen.

Teacher: This lot like writing. . . . They're all nice kids. They're mark conscious academics who want to improve. They're goal-directed and motivated, coming from stable, happy homes of middle class background. They want to get on in life. They don't ask you why they have to do it – they kind of understand.

Using data from 772 Australian teachers of grades seven to ten, Evans (1978: p. 19) has similarly found that the characteristics of students are strong influences on whether or not a teacher uses particular practices. In some cases, pupils are seen as discouragers and as encouragers in others. Students can so beleaguer their teachers' beliefs that the teacher-student relationships can be depicted as essentially conflictual. The power of teachers to pass rules or to define situations is not limited, but their power to enforce the rules is and so is their power to control pupils' attitudes towards the rules. Both of these limitations applied to the difficult classes taught by the two teachers above. From the case records and the verbatim comments, it seems that these two teachers probably received very little

support from their respective classes for their more "progressive" constructs. The more academic and middle class groups did not seem so actively to constrain or hamper thirteen teachers' consistent construct implementation. However, the pupil effects on the teachers still remain shadowy here as in much of the previous research (Sharp and Green, 1975; Hargreaves, Hester and Mellor, 1975). There have been almost no experimental studies which investigate the variable of "pupil effectiveness" or how students influence their teachers' perspectives and behaviour (see Klein, 1971: p. 405).

At Level IV, instructional climate was conceived of as an aspect of the learning environment that was defined by the characteristic demands made by each of the teachers as perceived by the students at whom these demands or emphases were directed. In order to put their constructs into effect in the classroom, the teachers needed to establish appropriate learning environments. The students' low influence judgements of their teachers' prevailing patterns of emphasis were tapped by questionnaire to reveal a number of dimensions.

Two experienced English educators who were otherwise not involved in the study drew upon the empirical descriptions of the two contrasting superordinate constructs provided by Diamond (1979a) in order to specify those dimensions of a learning environment most likely to be consistent with each of the teachers' perceived and endorsed constructs. For example, the teaching for growth construct (Category VIII) was conceptualised as requiring high levels of cohesiveness, diversity, democracy and satisfaction but low levels of formality, friction, favouritism, apathy and cliquishness for environmental consonance. In contrast, the teaching for skills construct (Category II) was seen as compatible with a high degree of formality, speed, friction, goal direction, difficulty, apathy and competiveness but with a low degree of diversity and satisfaction. In support for the above conceptualisation, the teachers themselves agreed that skills-based teachers' rooms have more constrained and less adventurous kinds of both environments and teaching strategies. Such teachers concentrate on content rather than on the child.

A tally was kept for the teachers' constructs and by summing it was possible to describe the environment required to implement their endorsed construct systems. The first teacher, for example, perceived and endorsed Feedback, Growth, Inductive Teaching, Developmental Sequence and Students positive by nature. Accordingly, his environment was required to be outstandingly diverse, satisfying and democratic but very lacking in formality, friction apathy and competition. As well, it needed to be very cohesive, somewhat lacking in favouritism, difficulty and cliqueness and lacking in speed.

Confirmation was indicated if the teacher's score on the relevant dimension was appropriately greater or lesser than the mean for the fifteen sample classes. If the number of confirmations equalled or exceeded that of refutations, the teacher's constructs were interpreted as still being adhered to. Since confirmation for the first teacher clearly exceeded refutation at a rate of 10:1, his constructs were considered to have been implemented in an environment conducive to consistency.

From the first perspective on Level IV, the construct systems of only eight teachers were seen as still being consistently employed. For one teacher, inconsistency had occured at the earliest possible level of commitment, while for a second teacher it had begun at Level III with his difficult

to control boys' class also sufficiently distracting him from his constructs. For the five remaining teachers inconsistencies began only when their endorsed constructs had to be translated into appropriate learning environments. Five of the seven teachers for whom a discrepancy was noted at this stage were originally classified as having transitional personal construct systems. As one of them explained,

> It's difficult to keep an easy-going attitude working with kids. You've got something in mind to do and you've got a group of thirty kids from different circumstances in front of you. It's going to be very hard to draw them all together. . . . The occasion is pretty rare when you can get the thirty all on side.

The students' responses at Level IV provided a second source of important data on the teachers' continued or impeded construct implementation. The topic chosen to elicit which of the teachers' constructs were able to be recognised by their classes was:

> A *friend* of yours is planning to complete grade 10 at your school next year. He or she has just written to you asking what he or she will have to do in order to succed in *writing* for grade 10 next year. *Explain* how your friend could gain the highest possible grades or marks for writing and also *outline* some of the things he or she is likely to *enjoy* or find *difficult* in being taught how to write.

This showed the degree to which the students were enabled to construe accurately the teaching of writing that they had experienced.

These data were examined in order to reveal the larger clusters of categories which together accounted for over 75 per cent of the total number of responses made about each teacher. As an example, over 130 suggestions were made about one teacher by his twenty-six students. Their four largest clusters were coded independently as relating to the skills, a positive attitude, deductive teaching and to teaching for growth. This combination was interpreted as confirming his transitional approach to the teaching of writing as it also accounted for 81 per cent of the total number of responses.

Five more teachers were perceived to stress what could be described as a transitional or mixed cluster consisting of deductive teaching, positive student attitudes, teaching the skills and teaching for growth. Two other teachers emphasised the first three of these categories but replaced the teaching for growth construct with poor teacher-student relationships to produce what seemed to be a more skills-based version of teaching writing. Another two teachers employed the four-fold transitional or mixed cluster and added to it an emphasis on the importance of reading. A group of three other teachers were perceived as firmly skills-based, communicating only the first three categories of deductive teaching, positive student attitudes and teaching the skills, while the fourteenth teacher stressed only student attitudes and skills. The last teacher was unique in that he was reported to teach in such a way that could still be classified as teaching for growth. At this stage, only three of the fifteen teachers were perceived to stress teaching for growth rather than the skills. However, two of them were strongly deductive in their overall emphasis and the charge of poor student relationships was also levelled at one of this pair.

Lacy (1970: pp. 173-1975) writes that it is the mark of successful teachers that the expectations their pupils develop in the classroom, through the process of interaction, are close to their teachers' own. Only eight teachers

had this measure of success. Two of them had their skills construct systems verified, one his teaching for growth repertory and five others their mixed or transitional personal construct systems. Four teachers were again inconsistent, while three others had their constructs obscured for the first time. Six of these seven teachers were either growth-centred or transitional in orientation. Only five teachers in all were still consistently implementing their constructs without any discrepancy.

Two teachers stressed that, from this perspective on Level IV, it is the size of classes that is the obstacle to be overcome. One of them states:

> It's hard because we can't get around to each kid as an individual. If I could just sit down with each one of them with their last piece of writing and say, "This is what you've done. This is how you could have done better." That's the only way you could communicate your criteria.

As a subject master, another teacher found that time, planning and reading all the work that his students completed were his biggest problems. The two other subject masters had to cope with other internal difficulties. While the latter said that teachers had to struggle in temporary classrooms in order "to get an atmosphere conducive to a mood of writing," the former found that lack of a suitable home-room unsettled his class.

Next at Level IV I rated the centroid teachers on each of twenty high inference variables from five to one. From the size of the standard deviations, the teachers differed most in their use of structuring comments and in the degree of student involvement that they generated. On the other hand, they were very alike in promoting two kinds of writing (personal and expository), in avoiding harsh criticism but in using a moderately direct presentation and in allowing few opportunities for students to write. This suggests that in the classroom most of the teachers probably shared a skills-based approach to the teaching of writing.

As in relation to the learning environment, two English educators described those interactionist dimensions which were conceptualised as necessary for the implementation of each construct. For example, the teaching for skills construct was seen as requ ng high levels of clarity, accountability, organisation, criticism, direct presentation and of structuring comments, but as requiring correspondinly low levels of adaptability, enrichment, types of writing, indirect climate, student participation and of student involvement for classroom consonance. In contrast, the teaching for growth construct was described in terms of a high degree of adaptability, enrichment, enthusiasm, indirect climate, student participation, attention and involvement, opportunities to write, discourse at many levels, and of some disturbances, but involving a low degree of types of writing and of direct presentation.

The audio-tapes of the classroom teaching behaviours allowed me to produce ratings for the teachers which were then examined in order to decide if they had been able to transform their perceived and endorsed constructs into congruent teaching strategies. A tally was kept for each of their constructs and by summing it was possible to describe the teaching behaviours necessary to implement their total construct systems. Confirmation was indicated if the teacher's score for the variable was appropriately above or below the mean for the fifteen teachers. As before, if the number of confirmations equalled or exceeded that of refutations, the teacher's construct system was interpreted as still being consistently implemented.

The same first teacher, for example, was required to provide outstanding levels of adaptability, enrichment, enthusiasm, student participation, attention

and envolvement and of opportunities to write, but lesser levels of accountability, indirect climate, positive alerting, disturbance, multi-layered discourse and of preparation. In contrast, he needed to avoid organisation, harsh criticism, many types of writing and especially a direct presentation. He met these requirements in all instances except those of student participation, opportunities to write, positive alerting, disturbance, organisation and types of writing. For this teacher confirmation exceeded refutation at the rate of 11:6, clearly indicating that his construct system had not "dropped out" but was being implemented with consistency in the classroom.

From the third perspective on Level IV, three teachers were interpreted as still consistently implementing their construct systems, while barriers and inconsistency continued for six other teachers. In contrast, two other teachers clearly showed consistency once again. Impediments had occurred for them only from the perspective of student responses. This implies that these teachers were not able to communicate their inferred superordinate constructs clearly enough to their classes and/or that they had changed their teaching performance for the benefit of the observer. Inconsistency was noted for two of the skills-based teachers, even though they had been able to communicate their skills-based construct system quite clearly to their classes. Finally, one teacher was seen to have been inconsistent only from the perspective of her learning environment, while inconsistency occurred for another teacher only from the perspective of her interactions.

As Level IV was completed, the majority of the teachers were seen either to follow or revert to the obstinately familiar, skills-based pedagogy. However, two teachers still adhered to their transitional paradigm as did a third teacher to his growth-oriented point of view. This teacher appeared as something of an idealistic crusader who steadfastly pursued the personal growth of his students without admitting to any obstacle.

Overall, classroom teaching seemed to be surprisingly alike in reflecting the traditional, didactic pedagogy. Despite the cries that continue to go up, the "basics" model was all but universally put into practice. Though the espoused construct system of only three teachers were described at Levels I and II as skills-based, many more of the teachers in the classroom were in fact teaching the so-called "basics". While only 51 per cent of the original ninety-three teachers recognised the mechanical skills (Category II) as a way of teaching writing (Diamond, 1979a), in the classroom it became the "one way" for eleven of the fifteen centroid teachers. Many teachers of English may themselves be in the forefront in keeping the "back to basics" movement alive.

The students also referred overwhelmingly to their teachers' insistence on "good spelling, grammar and punctuation." The emphasis was clearly on form and the mechanics. Contrary to the usual allegation, there was "no pop approach using pop materials." Similarly, neither the Bullock Report (1975) nor Bennett *et al.* (1976: p. 150) could find any evidence of a wholesale move towards informality of teaching methods in British schools. Certainly, these Queensland teachers were not dabbling in permissive, "soft", or progressive practices.

So great was their expressed fear of error-making and subsequent reprisals that pupils alleged they did not feel free to express themselves. They complained about having to "stick to one topic" which was often described as "boring" and also about having to do precisely what was set, even down to completing the exact number of words — a curious carry-

over from the defunct public examinations. The students felt they were being cheated. No matter what they wrote about or how they wrote about it they believed it would be "looked down upon"; however, they advised that "you'll do well if you crawl."

Though some scope was afforded for the imagination, the form of writing that was most prized by the teachers was expository and persuasive. Writing was taught almost exclusively through its transactional mode. This was not prepared for by extensive and continuing writing in the expressive-poetic or personal mode. As the students complained, the essay was still the standard by which their writing was judged:

> The thing you might hate in English as I do is writing essays and gettings marks for them.
>
> The worst thing is having to do essays.
>
> All you can do is make certain that your essay is neat and try to make as little mistakes as possible.

From the impressionistic but triangulated evidence, the following general conclusions were drawn. Apart from three teachers writing was taught in a very conservative manner. It was based on the teaching of skills super-ordinate construct. The students' intentions were sacrificed to the teachers' purposes and to their adult notions of correctness. Form was preferred to content, and knowledge about writing was provided rather than satisfying experiences of composing. Writing was regarded as a product to be corrected and graded rather than as a process to be enjoyed. Perhaps this explains why most of the teachers did not write themselves. Only three actually attempted to complete for themselves the writing tasks that they set their students.

The teachers often inserted distracting injunctions even into the motivational stages of their lessons as, for example,

> I want you to write just say ten to fifteen lines about either of these two people in the photos. What they're doing at the moment, what they're thinking about or their faces. There's a dictionary there. If you can't spell or anything, look it up.

The feeling was that writing was something done in order to show conformity to an abstract set of precepts that "you have to get firmly in your minds". Two teachers insisted that their students be logical and concise, using topic sentences and rejecting irrelevancies. Another teacher reminded her unruly class of the general principles underlying writing, while a fourth emphasised the importance of unity when writing a poem. A fifth teacher began his lesson by asking for a definition of style only to then give six himself.

Four teachers stressed the importance of pre-planning, with one of them stating:

> First jot down a couple of ideas and use these as your basis and around that build what you're going to write.

In contrast, Britton (1972: p. 53) advises that:

> We must give more credit than we often do to the process of shaping at the point of utterance and not inhibit the kind of discovery that can take place by insisting that children know exactly what they are going to say before they come to say it.

Such an idea probably reflects the growth-centred rather than the skills-based pedagogy and the latter was firmly practised by most of the centroid teachers. Emig (1967: p. 129) insightfully describes this kind of traditional

teaching of writing as being dangerously truncated:

> For far too many of us, the definition of teaching composition, like our definition of teaching in general, is solely the specifying of constraints. This means we are fulfilling only half or less of our function.

From the final perspective on Level IV, only three teachers were interpreted as still consistently and faithfully putting into effect their personal construct systems and without any previous discrepancy. Another three teachers re-asserted in practice their skill-based repertories of constructs, while another two teachers re-affirmed their more transitional systems. In contrast, obstacle and discrepancy continued for the remaining seven teachers.

As Levels II, III and IV were traversed, the constructs of only three teachers were consistently put into effect. Since discontinuities occurred for the other twelve teachers, it can be claimed that teaching sustains T. S. Eliot's gloomy image of the shadow falling between the idea and the act. However, only 6 per cent of the thirty-three examples of thwarted intentions occurred at the point of administrative and student influence. Obstacles or discrepancies between the teachers' ideas and practices were most widespread at Level IV. As one teacher stated, if an idea of construct is going to fail, it fails in the classroom.

Suspicions of the lack of implementation of teachers' ideas are confirmed as well founded. As Sarason (1971: p. 86) reports, intended outcomes do not occur most often in the classroom and program regularities, such as an emphasis on teaching the skills or the "basics", continue to persist. While much of the thinking and rhetoric of education may be towards personalised and student-centred teaching, the actual practice is far from being so. Although teachers may view growth-oriented ideas and methods as desirable, they still practise the skills-based pedagogy.

In the present study, obstruction could so rarely be attributed to school administrators that teachers may not reasonably blame "them" for the chains they wear. The barriers to the application of teachers' ideas loomed largest in the classroom itself. If the school system can no longer be portrayed as the chief culprit in constraining teachers of English, perhaps programs of teacher education and their lack of effect in fundamentally altering teachers' core and central beliefs may be looked at as a possible source of the general frustration; that is, together with the constraints of class size and class time, as constituting the real "they". Perhaps the teachers' schemes were never well laid at all. One teacher describes something of the genesis of the "grief and pain":

> Trainee teachers often don't understand their college "gear". Especially in your first years out, you reproduce the teaching you experienced. You always end up with conflict and you're left asking if you're doing the right thing. Do you really believe in your own convictions?

Whatever their origins, the results raise the uncomfortable possibility that teachers themselves might be determining that their fate be thought of as already determined; that they might be digging the very ruts which they claim are getting deeper. But, as Mair (1977: p. 267) warns, there may be worse to come if they dare to step outside their usual paths and go beyond the safe and familiar routines of teaching. Venturing along new avenues of freedom teachers may encounter considerable distress. If the invitation to leave the settled teaching conventions is to be accepted and if it is to be carried to some constructive conclusion, other ways of coping must be

developed. By becoming ever more involved with teachers, teacher educators may learn to help them to forge more personally effective approaches to action. Ceasing to be the more or less willing victims of the alleged demands of others takes courage and support.

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English in an Integrated Curriculum

John Watts
Countesthorpe College, Leicester, United Kingdom

Strong frames reduce the power of the pupil over what, when and how he receives his knowledge (Bernstein, 1973: p. 206)

The problem that Countesthorpe identified and faced in 1970, was that of offering each student, in a 14-18 comprehensive school, the maximum autonomy of study and choice of personal curriculum (i.e. weakening the "frames") without loss of identity, group membership and a sense of coherence. The initial invitations to students demonstrated rapidly that an excess of choice is bewildering. Countesthorpe was forced in its first two years of existence to hasten the evolution of a system that would strike the right balance, if it was not to lurch through a series of disasters into a return to the status quo, the "tried and approved methods" so-called. That of course has been the fate of all ill-prepared innovations.

The history of that early stage has been recounted elsewhere. What evolved was a system that I shall outline in this paper. The problem that this system attempted to solve was not, however, just an organisational one: it was the central one of how the general run of adolescents might make coherent sense of studies which too commonly have appeared to them fragmented, incoherent and with little bearing upon their concerns and aspirations.

We have raised the school-leaving age in my lifetime from fourteen to sixteen, creating a whole new category of the population, obliged without precedent to follow a given curriculum, while being deprived of the wage and partial adult status enjoyed by former generations. They have been compelled to join groups they have not chosen for company; to be in places they have not asked to go to, at times laid down by somebody else; to be given information they have not sought, by teachers they have not opted to learn from. The wonder is that they have not broken out in open rebellion. It is perhaps sadder that they have sighed, complied, and in large measure judged it to be a boring irrelevance.

The organisational solution which was arrived at in 1972 was to construct a series of sub-schools ("teams" in our vernacular). On arrival at the age of fourteen, students form "teams" of about 100 to 150 in number, largely governed by friendship groups and the advice of staff at the feeder schools, but as far as possible so that each team reflects in smaller scale the range of intake across the whole school. Each team has its own clearly contained base in the school, with amenities for study, lockers, toilets and pegs. It is a sub-school within the school. A team is subdivided into tutorial groups, and the tutors — five or six of them — offer a set of specialisms that will include between them English, Maths and Social Studies. Those teachers work and plan as a unit, keeping the same student membership for

the two years fourteen to sixteen. After two years the students either leave school or join the sixth form, and the staff receive a new intake.

Teams operate for a long session extending over half of each day. The tutors organise work, establishing between them a rhythm of activities engaging at different times individuals, small groups, class-sized groups (20-30) or the whole team. (Each team has in its cluster of spaces one in which all its members can assemble.) There is consequently a wide range of kinds of work that may go on in a team, with choices to be made by each student in negotiation with, first their personal tutor, and then others among the remaining four or five. The personal tutor is also responsible for constructing with each student in the tutorial group a personal curriculum and timetable covering both team-time and the other half of the day out and about in the other departments. The more adventurous student's timetable will eat into team-time, while some will add to their team-time. Only rarely, and by chance, will two students end up with an identical programme. The permutation of subject combinations is limited ultimately by the master-timetable, not by the class or stream of course that the student belongs to.

The team therefore provides each student with stability, challenge and contact. Stability is afforded by membership of a small unit, not just a "house" or a group that meets daily only for registration and notices, but one that forms the central arrangement for work and spare time. Students arrive in team before school, may stay there at breaks and lunch hour: there is always at least one of the team's tutors on duty. If a breakdown of any sort occurs during the day, students return to the team. They drop-in rather than drop-out. A student may arrange to change tutor within the team, and this happens from time to time after negotiations, often thereby resolving a personal conflict before it becomes critical. Technically, a student may apply to transfer to another team, following friendship changes, but it is a comment on the strength of the team's social cohesion that this rarely happens. "Floaters" form fewer than 1 per cent of any age group.

This stability and close contact with tutors make possible the challenge of a wide range of curriculum options. Under guidance and from the secure base of the team, each student handles more diversity than was originally thought possible. Their personal timetable is essentially a contract. It may not be altered or departed from unilaterally, but is open to renegotiation. That renegotiation may lead to an alteration of times and need only involve that student, the tutor and the teachers affected: it may lead to a change of subjects and will then involve the parents as well. If it cannot be arranged, all can see why: if it can be arranged, and it is agreed to be to the student's advantage, then it is. The basic membership of team and tutor group remains unaltered so that readjustment and attendant anxiety is minimal.

The ability to negotiate does not come naturally: it has to be learnt, but like other skills, it is learnt through doing. Usually in school, the youngster's inadequacy in negotiation gives rise to the teacher's impatience and justifies to him his pre-empting all the decisions. This leaves the student unskilled, or even, since he is unlikely not to have developed *some* skill at negotiation and autonomy outside school (if only to get himself there), de-skilled. The team provides the setting for the aquisition of these skills.

The epistemological solution is pointed to by Douglas Barnes (1976):

> The more a learner *controls* his own language strategies, and the more he is enabled to think aloud, the more he can be responsible for formulating explanatory hypotheses and evaluating them. It is not easy to make this possible in a typical lesson . . . average pupils of secondary age are capable of this if they are placed in a social context which supports it.

The Countesthorpe sub-school could be the setting for traditionally directive teaching. Instead, the occasion has been found for that "social context which supports" those "average pupils of secondary age" in the development of autonomy in their learning. It has above all been the context for an unusually continuous and prolonged dialogue between student and teacher, in a relationship that, while informal and non-coercive, is beyond that of friendship. In a perspective paper entitled "A Case for Conversation" two of our teachers of English, Richard Martin and Jenifer Smith, (1979) wrote:

> What we hope to do in this chapter is to describe an opportunity. It is an opportunity afforded us in our teaching to "associate well" with students, not just by knowing them, but also, by engaging with them in their learning, in a collaborative effort which can be mutually exciting and rewarding. Such a view of learning provides the framework for considerations of discipline: behaviour problems and learning difficulties can become part and parcel of the relationship between student and teacher, rather than extraneous distractions which interfere with an already established curriculum. It is our experience that education must be fitted to the student, adapted to his particular needs and interests; learning, and the problems that accompany it, need to be made part of a continuous conversation between teacher and student. The opportunity we try to describe, then, is not one which merely eases the traditional relationship between teacher and student, but one which substantially alters the focus of that relationship, encouraging the student to direct and control the course of his own learning. It is learning, therefore, which is at the centre of the relationship and provides the framework for "associating well".

In effect, the tutor-student point of contact is that from which learning may take *any* angle of departure. In team, no teacher ever says "that's outside my province". He may say, "I don't know much about that, but let's find out". Or she may say, "I may be able to help, so let's get the problem clear first. What is it you are trying to find out?" In other words, the conversation is maintained and developed, and the student's exploration is taken into areas where the teacher may need to hand over to someone else, but someone else located by her agency.

This has considerable implication for the skills that the teacher must have acquired, but I shall not pursue that here. The point here is that for the student, the programme of learning can become coherent, and the pursuit of understanding is more likely to result in knowledge becoming the student's own, modifying his own picture of reality, rather than adding more furniture to the repository of stored information.

Those with misgivings about the practicality of such an open approach to learning may take heart from Martin and Smith (1979). They write:

> If the idea of doing without an established curriculum sounds alarming, it should be remembered that each lesson does not begin in chaos and continue in anarchy: for each student in each lesson there is a

context, and work is seen as a continuum. There will be a hiatus when interest is lost or work completed, when new work needs to be initiated or ideas offered which will stimulate a new, even short-lived interest, but team allows time for conversation. It is through the continuing conversation between teacher and student that much of the learning advances; and conversation provides the metaphor for the manner in which the relationship is conducted: relaxed, informal, concerned.

The role of English in this scheme has already been indicated in part. It is the way in which the team is pervaded by exchanges of expressive language that creates the context for study, planned or spontaneous. Language provides the "space" into which the teacher may permit the action to move. Furthermore, the conversation is also the very means by which much of the learning actually occurs. The role of language across the curriculum could hardly be better exemplified than in a team base. As a non-mathematician, for instance, I have frequently found that when approached by a student or group of students with a Maths problem, I have been able, by putting myself in the role of the learner, to promote the dialogue out of which the students, in the process of clarifying the problem for me, will arrive at the solution. (I think I learnt that dodge from Socrates, by the way.)

Secondly, English, spoken and written, is the unifying element of the curriculum. The specialist teacher of English in a team will therefore be offered opportunity for maximising competence in well-diversified uses of English, while being well-placed, vis-a-vis colleagues of other specialisms, to discourage abuses, such as the production of heavily directive work-sheets, dependence on printed data at inappropriate reading levels, and other malpractices based upon false assumptions about English-related study skills.

As an example of such unified work arising from the opportunities of a team, let me quote from the writing of a group of fifteen-year-old students who became interested in the large sculpture by Philip King, which stands in the centre of the circular courtyard around which Countesthorpe College is built. This group, with their tutor (who is a historian), set themselves the task of photographing this work. Called "Dunstable Reel," it consists of six shapes cut in heavy steel plate welded at their points of contact into a ring.

Lisa: In the centre of our school there is a modern art statue called "The Dunstable Reel". It was mounted when the school was just built. It was dreamed up by a famous artist and is worth a lot of money. Before studying it I had never taken much notice of it and to me it was just another piece of modern art. I thought photographing it would be great fun as there were so many different angles, curves and straight lines involved in it. We took photographs from all different positions some even lying on the floor looking up at it. Then a friend and I made a model replica so then it was even easier to take weird shots.

In one of the photos my hand was placed over part of the statue making it look very unusual. I also placed a mouse inside the statue but before I had pressed the shutter the mouse had disappeared to the end of the table. Many though were quite successful although a few faults occurred in the printing as it was my first attempt. If you look carefully on the photographs

you can see fingerprints and white marks where specks of dust were.

Here, it seems to me, we have a record of the way in which language may hold together a set of diverse experiences, presenting to the observant teacher, and to the student herself, the very nexus of perceptions from which may be teased out a host of learning routes.

Jan: I started off by drawing the straightened out sculpture. I then wondered whether the movement the reel has is entirely enclosed within or is some or all of it radiating out from it. I coloured the sculpture then repeated the lines of the sculpture as often as the paper would allow. Finally I painted over half of the lines to give the picture the light/dark aspect that the sculpture has.

Jan later wrote an additional account of her analysis:

After drawing the sculpture straightened out, I took the top continuous line and drew it on a fresh piece of paper. Then I turned the paper upside down and drew the line again. I drew the line again but drew it in reverse, starting from the opposite end, finally I reversed the paper and repeated the latter. The result was quite interesting, the same line drawn from different angles had produced an interesting pattern containing a lot of the movement from the sculpture.

Finally Jan produced this poem:

Dipping, swooping, swinging, swaying,
Waking up, jumping into life,
Bow, courtesy,
Round again, round again, again,
Getting dizzy, stop.
Frozen in the last dance,
Still, cold,
Frozen in the death dance, forever,
Captured in the swirling movement never to move again, dead.

Even in this short space I cannot forebear to comment on the way that Jan's three pieces of writing illustrate for me the variety of forms that *creative writing* may take. The first two pieces, I would contend are as creative in their fitting of language to the complex explorative analysis of shape and pattern as is the poem which sets out to capture the emotional relationship she has discerned between cold steel and dancing. The important thing is that in each of the pieces she is pinning the experience down with her language so that the experience has validity for her, making it a part of her.

Pitfalls undoubtedly exist where English is taught in the integrated team. There are special techniques that the teacher has to learn, although there is little case for saying that the system depends on outstanding teachers, and there is the special advantage that in this open system the novice is able to develop the techniques by sitting alongside Nelly (as long that is, as there is plenty of time between sessions for talking it over with Nelly and the others). However, there are one or two specific reefs for the English staff to watch out for in this way of working.

Monitoring the progress of each individual has to be carefully coordinated across the team. There is no group syllabus that will provide the general route markers for the teacher and so careful plotting of work needs to be recorded if the student's enterprises are never to become disjointed or,

more likely, repetitive. Paper records are necessary but not the whole answer. The success of the team system depends on each tutor taking advantage of the continuous contact to get to know each student well personally and not to allow his attention to be concentrated upon some at the expense of others. This makes for sub-standard teaching in a conventional classroom but in a team it can be disastrous.

In spite of the example that I have cited of a group task centering on the courtyard sculpture, there is a tendency for the individualised curriculum to promote individualised tasks at the expense of activities in which the major benefit arises from it involving a group with a teacher. However true it is that a book must in the end be read by an individual in private, there is no substitute for the group discussion under the guidance of a teacher. Such sessions can be organised within the team system, but there lies the rub. They have to be planned and organised by the English teacher without the prompting that a normal timetable framework supplies. It is perfectly possible, but needs watching or else time slips by and a week or two may pass in intensive individualised activity without certain students having sat down in a group for a lesson with the English specialist.

Related to the danger of English lessons being abandoned, lives the danger of English being reduced to the servicing agency. Again, there is no reason to fear that this is inevitable, but a team needs a strong English specialist, prompt with the justifications for English having its distinct contribution to make in the network of the curriculum, rather than offering merely the means of retrieving information and making accurate records or notes.

Although it does not always happen, one might expect in a school organised on departmental lines that English teaching will be given some unity of outlook and approach by the leadership of the Head of Department and the team sense of the English specialists. In the Countesthorpe sub-school system, the teams have such a degree of autonomy that the English Department ceases to have any identity. This is a source of potential weakness if only because there is no certainty of the strengths of the specialist staff being shared and spread. It could, in theory, lead to any one team failing to provide specialist English other than as the servicing agency. At best it can lead to unnecessary repetition of such tasks as drawing up reading lists or the over printing of supplementary material.

Safeguards can be found, though it requires senior staff to be vigilant watchdogs. There has to be a guarantee that each team will contain an English specialist who understands the nature of the function of language and literature in any curriculum grouping. Given that, then there is an enriched possibility of specialists in other subjects becoming suitably infected with enthusiasm for this conception of English, and we find them as eager to encourage a poem as a diagram.

Similarly, the function of an English Department can be largely replaced by regular liaison across the teams between the English specialists. For this to happen at all requires either that the role of Head of Department still exists on an altered scale, or as happens at Countesthorpe, with its marked independence of hierarchy, that the English staff between them adequately share out the tasks of, for example, meeting-convener, exam board representative, text book orderer, bookshop manager, and so on. Where this is successfully undertaken it can confer on each member a sense of increased professional responsibility. It is not only the student but also the teacher

who needs to be enabled, in Douglas Barne's words, "to think aloud . . . and be responsible for formulating explanatory hypotheses and evaluating them". The team system at Countesthorpe undoubtedly imposes extra burdens on its teachers, but they seem positively to welcome them, perhaps because it is through these additional responsibilities that, like their students, they feel they have a stake in the whole curriculum and life of the school.

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A Valid Way to Assess the Effects of a Writing Project

Betty Jane Wagner
National College of Education
Evanston, Illinois, USA.

One of the most widely publicised and generously funded phenomena across the United States at the present time are programs for teachers to improve writing instruction. The timing coincides with the public's concern for the development of traditional or basic skills and its response to the widespread adverse publicity about public education, which reflects a deep-seated dissatisfaction with the schools and their effectiveness.

In the 1960s and even early 1970s, it was still possible to get local bond issues passed and increases in funding for federal educational programs voted in because of the public's faith that more dollars would mean better education. That faith is gone. Nor is our economy in the same shape it was then. Now a program must "demonstrate effectiveness" to merit funding. This means it must show convincingly that it is achieving its aims and is cost effective. Thus, even programs that everyone agrees are valuable and important are under pressure to provide hard data, because "demonstrated effectiveness" and "convincing evidence" are by and large defined in terms of such data. We find ourselves increasingly using assessments of student performance as a way to show the effect of a particular intervention or program. I have regretted having to join in this process, because I have long been convinced that we are testing our children into resistance and despair. But for me to overly lament this state of affairs is hypo-critical as long as I am choosing to feed from the federal trough.

I am also in an ambivalent relationship to the public media. Without the false hype of the "literacy crisis" they have generated, which I do regret, there might not be the dollars for research like Donald Graves' fascinating case studies or for educational programs for teachers like the Chicago Area Writing Project, co-directed by Steven Zemelman and me. However, much as we need publicity, I have not given in to the pressure from one Chicago newspaper reporter to give him some evidence from my work with teachers that they do not know how to write or teach. When I tell him the truth, namely, that the teachers we work with can write well and do reflect deeply on the teaching act, he goes away without any "news".

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*The research design was developed by Wagner and Steven Zemelman of Roosevelt University, Chicago (co-directors of the Chicago Area Writing Project), Anne Mickles of Loyola University, Chicago, and Harvey Daniels of Rosary College, River Forest, Illinois.

How can we provide hard data and keep money flowing into writing projects without contributing to the testing overkill or becoming Cassandras about declining skills? Perhaps our experience in the Chicago area will provide one model that can contribute to our collective wisdom.

As you may know, writing projects such as those based on the model of the highly visible Bay Area Writing Project have only recently been able to prove effectiveness. One reason is that they tend to attract teachers who are already doing a fine job, so have less to learn and their growth is harder to detect. Also, the teachers typically get trained in the summers; when they go back into their schools, they teach a different group of students than they taught the previous school year, so the two groups cannot be compared. How do project directors then set up a useful research design? Only by doing a pre- and a post-test on the same group of students can we control most of the variables, and then only if we have a control group to which to compare them. But if we are to compare the trained teachers with their counterparts in comparable schools, how are we to match them? We may well be faced with the dilemma of comparing the performance of students of excellent teachers with the performance of those of other excellent teachers, and the differences between them may be too subtle to be measured by our present testing instruments. Or at least, this is what we worried about when we set up our research design.

It looks as if we need not have worried. Before I left for this trip, the computer was spitting out voluminous data, which show a significant difference between the performance of the target and the control groups of students. In other words, those students whose teachers were trained in a five-week summer institute have out-performed the control group and at a much higher level than we dared hope. This means we have the needed, but not necessarily sufficient evidence for state validation of our project next year. With the data we now have it looks as if we will have a very good shot at this validation, and this will mean continued funding. However, we are aware that other considerations, such as the feasibility of replicating the project training or the cost effectiveness, will be taken into account.

If we get a go-ahead from the state of Illinois, our next step will be to make a bid for validation at the national level (granted by the National Diffusion Network of the US Department of Education). So far, only two writing projects — the New Jersey and the Nebraska Writing Projects — have achieved this aim.

I recently consulted with a writing project director in another state, and her blank look when I asked about her control data sugested to me that perhaps I should elaborate here on how the Chicago Area Writing Project set up the evaluation procedure that is now yielding us such warm and welcome statistics.

We selected the popular comparative methods study because it seemed the most likely design to provide convincing data to meet the state of Illinois' stringent demands for "demonstrating measurable change in student behavior" as a requisite for getting validated as a Title IV-C innovative project. Indeed, any state following the federal guidelines for validation of educational practices will impose the same kind of pressure for hard data. English teachers tend to be a soft breed, generally in tune with far more significant but much less measurable realities, so we sometimes have difficulty rising to the challenge of providing statistical proof. But these are difficult times. The public wants accountability; taxpayers are disenchanted

with ballooning school budgets that seem to be out of proportion with the quality of the education their children are getting. So all of us who want continued funding to buy time for teachers to take a long, in-depth look at their job and make some new discoveries about writing may have to go beyond the enchanting so-called "soft" data and provide evidence that includes as many of the specifications of measurability and controls for invalidity as possible. The comparative methods study is one way to do it.

From the beginning we were acutely aware of the complexities of this design in any setting other than a laboratory that can provide strict control of all variables. We all know the isolation of variables is almost impossible in any classroom setting, and when what is being measured is writing, the problem is compounded. Good writing is most likely to occur in a natural setting for a real purpose and for a reader clearly identified in the writer's mind. It is not easy to make a test situation meet these criteria. In fact, one of the challenges to our profession is to find a way to sufficiently standardise naturalistic writing conditions so we can demonstrate more convincingly than now the high quality of writing we teachers of English know students *can* produce.

As a testing instrument we chose an expressive writing prompt developed and released by the National Assessment for Educational Progress. We felt it would appeal to the students' sense of story at all grade levels. In order to have reliable data that might later be compared with the results of the National Assessment for Educational Progress evaluations of seventeen-year-olds across the nation in 1969-70, 1973-74, and 1979-80, we administered the tests in exactly the same manner as was done in the NAEP assessments. Thus, the writing samples we obtained were written under these conditions: an examiner unknown to the students came in and told them that their teacher would not see their writing. Had the teachers themselves administered and scored the tests and responded to the writing in an appropriate manner, students might have written better, but the results would not have been comparable. Both target and control school students were assessed under exactly the same test conditions, so the reliability of the results was not jeopardised.

For our comparative methods study we needed a control group. Selecting schools that matched our target schools was comparatively easy, but convincing the administrations of those schools that their sole role in this project was to provide us with students whom we hoped would look comparatively bad was not so simple. We did promise their teachers first chance at any further summer institutes we would conduct, if we got validated, but for the control school teachers this promise was two years in the future and dependent upon the vagaries of funding. We also had to assure the administrations of control schools that the results of our study would not be publicised in a way that would identify their students as inferior in writing ability to those in target schools.

We selected control schools in communities that are classified by the NAEP criteria for community-type in the same groups as the communities in which the target schools are located. We chose control schools within these communities on the basis of their racial-ethnic characteristics and profiles of standardised test scores. High school matching was also based on the proportion of students continuing their education after graduation.

Then came the really baffling task: to figure out a way to compare our target teachers in the control schools. The teachers selected as participants

in the project could not be considered representative of the total teacher population of the six participating school districts. Therefore, selection of teachers for the control group was by matching, using the following variables:

- Teacher in public or private school.
- Grade level taught (elementary, junior high, high school).
- Education and teaching experience.
- Primary subject area taught.
- Attitude toward writing.
- Amount of writing assigned to students.
- Willingness to participate in a writing workshop (if available).

Matching was made to the general characteristics of the group, not teacher-to-teacher. A teacher questionnaire was distributed in the control schools, and teacher responses to the questions were matched with those of the thirty-three target teachers who also filled out questionnaires. The target teachers volunteered for training, so the teachers in the control schools were asked if they would volunteer to be part of a five-week summer institute. Only those who answered "Yes" were considered for the matching. As you know, the purpose of a control group is to establish a "base-line" of expected growth. We all know that time alone will bring children to a higher stage of development. (How many hours of our collective professional lives have been spent trying to convince anxious parents that "readiness" will come later?) So a control group showed how much we might expect students to improve between the pre- and post-tests without the emphasis on writing that we expected our trained teachers to provide. Without a control group we would never know whether the growth we observed in the target group was more than might be expected of a student at a particular age during the course of a few months.

We did both pre- and post-testing so the amount of growth during the period when students had the benefit of trained teachers could be described. To measure growth, we had to know the level at which the students started. We gave a select number of students in each group a post-test only to check to see if having written one story in the fall made a difference in performance on a post-test. If that were so, we could then correct for that difference.

In addition to the provision of control students and of both pre- and post-testing, we tried to control as many variables as possible. When we initially selected target and control schools, we checked to see that no other writing projects were taking place. Our goal was to control in as many ways as possible, so the results of our study would show that the one factor distinguishing the target and the control students was that the target group had the benefit of teachers trained by the Chicago Area Writing Project.

Although we were working with teachers, the evidence of our effectiveness was not what happened to them but what happened to their students. We needed a measuring instrument for students that was valid, reliable, and sensitive. The simplest, cheapest, and most reliable instruments to use would have been, of course, the standardised tests already in use in the six target school districts: Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Metropolitan Achievement Test, and Sequential Tests of Educational Progress for grades 1-8; Scholastic Achievement Test and American College Test for high schools.

All of these tests are nationally normed and fairly well respected in the communities in which we are working. However, except for the SAT and

ACT essay tests, all are atomistic, meaning they rely upon the assessment of particular features associated with the skill of writing but do not actually directly assess the quality of whole pieces of discourse. They are indirect measures, assessing necessary but not sufficient skills for writing. Typically, they measure: vocabulary, conventional standard English usage, and punctuation skills. At the high school level the result is recorded as a composite verbal score. These standardised tests are very widely used and easily and inexpensively scored by machine. However, they do not simulate real-life writing circumstances.

The greatest difficulty with atomistic or indirect measures, however, is that a person who scores high on such a test does not necessarily write well, and vice versa. See, for example, Roger A. McCraig's study of fourth graders (*Language Arts*, May 1977, pp. 491-496), which convincingly challenges these three commonly held assumptions:

- Children who score low on a test of mechanics are poor writers.
- Children who score in the middle zone on a test of mechanics are average writers.
- Children who score high on a test of mechanics are good writers.

When holistically scored writing samples were compared with test scores of mechanics, punctuation, capitalisation, and usage, there was not the correlation one might expect. The writing samples were evaluated on ideas, sentence sense, unity, organisation, coherence, sentence structure and wording, punctuation and capitalisation, word choice, emphasis, spelling, and use of language. Clearly, proficiency in this range of skills is a writing goal most communities would endorse. Only a direct measure, one that calls for scoring an actual sample of a child's writing, can assess all of the qualities listed above.

The invalidity of atomistic or indirect tests is not the only reason to reject them, however. There are two even more powerful reasons. The first is their effect on teaching. Testing is never just the end product of a course of instruction. It works backward to influence the teaching act. What gets measured on a test often gets drilled on in class because teachers — especially less than confident ones — tend to think that society values what the test measures. (And teachers tend to feel that some administrators judge teaching performance on the basis of student test scores.) Many do not realise that a test may simply comprise those writing skills that can most efficiently and inexpensively be tested. To write well, a person needs a much broader repertoire of thinking and imaging proficiencies than can be incorporated into any atomistic, machine-scorable test.

It is not just teachers, however, who are profoundly influenced by tests. Editors at the el-hi desks of major publishing houses keep their marketing eye on the composition of tests. They know they can appeal to potential buyers by citing better test performance by students who have piloted their textbooks. It may well be that one of the factors in the noticeable increase in the number of textbooks focusing on the writing process is the fact that the SAT has recently reinstated the writing sample, followed last year by the ACT as part of its new College Outcome Measures Project. Both are reliably scored holistically by trained readers.

It is interesting to speculate if part of the reason for the widely publicised decline in writing ability of American students in the first part of the last decade was the fact that the essay exam had been dropped from the most

widely used standardised tests. There does seem to be some evidence that students are writing better in the past few years, now that the essay exams are back. We eagerly await the November publication of the results of the writing evaluation of the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress.

So the Chicago Area Writing Project staff quickly rejected the idea of using efficient, inexpensive, and reliable standardised atomistic tests. They were not valid because they did not reflect the goal of the project, which was to show students how to write, not how to pass tests.

We had another option: have the students write whole stories or essays. Using these we could analyse the length and complexity of sentences or "T-units"; analyse the types of embedding represented in the writing samples. However, we felt there were at least two disadvantages to sentence analysis as the sole measure of writing performance. First there was insufficient normative data. Second, and much more important, there was the possibility that teachers would look at the assessment process and decide their major job was to drill on sentence combining to develop facility with syntactical manipulation. We felt that to measure the sophistication of embedding seemed simply an extension of looking at superficial surface features (handwriting, spelling, punctuation) as the sole basis of determining writing quality. It is good to be fluent and facile, in command of a wide range of sentence structures, but is that *the* most important skill writers need to develop? We sensed that again what we chose to measure might be perceived by the teachers to be what we most valued. This bothered us. Sentence analysis as the sole means of evaluating seems to ignore some of the more fundamental features of good writing, such as unity, elaboration, or liveliness. We may later decide to analyse sentence structure, but, if we do, it will be in the context of an assessment of the overall quality of a piece of discourse.

Now where are we? We were committed to a writing sample and wanted to choose one of the holistic means of evaluation, but here we were severely restrained by our budget, which was publicly cited by the Illinois State Board of Education office as a model of leanness and cost effectiveness.

We would have liked to but could not afford to get more than one pre- and post-test sample from each student in order to correct for the fact that the timing or topic might have been wrong for particular individuals, but we had to settle for one. To cut down on the cost of training scorers and also to make possible a comparison across grade levels, we wanted to find a single test that could be used for all levels. Most holistic tests are designed for just one or two of these levels: primary, intermediate, junior high, high school.

We turned to Primary Trait Scoring, developed by the National Assessment for Educational Progress. This most sophisticated of the holistic measures came the closest to what we needed. Unlike other holistic measures, Primary Trait Scoring is reliable for comparing student performance from year to year. It does not just rank the performance of a particular group. A trait is either present or absent in a given writing sample, so assessors can determine if overall writing performance is improving, declining, or remaining constant over time. In other words, Primary Trait Scoring provides more absolute information than merely how a given paper ranks in its group.

Primary Trait Scoring had another advantage. We could compare our student performance with NAEP norms. We could also compare it with student performance in one of the eight states now using Primary Trait

Scoring for statewide writing assessments (according to the nationwide survey conducted last year by the Wisconsin Pupil Assessment Program). Although a great many school districts use Primary Trait Scoring in district assessments of nine-, thirteen-, and seventeen-year-olds, we are the first to use this type of assessment for all ages and in a pre- and post-test situation.

We also wanted to compare student performance across grade levels, so we looked through the NAEP released test instruments for one that might appeal to students of any age. We decided on an expressive writing test because we felt the younger children would do better writing a story than a description, report, persuasive letter, or other type of transactional writing. We decided to use the NAEP stork expressive writing instrument.

Our choice of a single NAEP instrument then would provide a valid and reliable measure and would make possible comparisons across grade levels. In addition, the Primary Trait analysis reflected an assumption our writing project staff firmly believes, namely, that these two assertions are *not* true:

- Good writing is simply good writing.
- Once you know how to do one kind of writing, you can do any kind.

Rather we believe that good writing is that which has the desired effect upon a specific audience. For example, the single most important quality in a good story about a stork is different from the most important quality (primary trait) of a good set of directions for assembling a bicycle. Primary Trait Scoring is rhetorically and situationally specific. Each type of writing task requires a different particular approach if it is to be successful. Thus, with the stork expressive instrument, scorers had to look at the quality of the storytelling, to see if there was evidence of the ability to sustain and develop a narrative.

The evaluator trained the test administrators who joined her in giving the test to students of both the thirty-one target teachers and the twenty control teachers. All the elementary children of these teachers were tested, but only selected matching classes of the junior high and high school teachers were used. All students in each class took the test, but because of the large number of students tested (1600), only half of the tests were scored, and the selection was random. Teachers did not know which students were included in the actual evaluation. Each test was marked with a code number, which was used in the random selection. The scoring of the tests was blind, meaning the cover sheets were removed and coded, so the readers could make no distinction between the target and control group. The pre- and post-tests were also mixed together and scored at the same time.

To assure that our readers would be trained to score in a manner consistent with those who score NAEP assessments, we sent our evaluator and one of our readers to the Westinghouse Learning Corporation in Iowa City to be trained in test administration and scoring. They had the same training as the National Assessment scorers had.

Following the guidelines established by NAEP, the evaluator in turn trained the rest of our team of scorers in a one-day session. The Teacher Training Packet developed by NAEP and the Westinghouse Learning Corporation was used for the training. Readers scored training papers until they internalised the scoring system and became consistent in their assessments of the primary trait, which was to express a story.

As we got into the scoring, we noted that a high proportion of high school students scored a three on the NAEP five-point scale, and yet there

was a wide range between the quality of the best and worst papers within this category. We are now in the process of refining this category to make the test more sensitive.

Implications for further research excite and confound us in their abundance. We are beginning to note parallels between the children's written stories and stages in oral storytelling and to sense a step-by-step story progression that is showing up even in the higher grades. Jean Piaget's stages of moral development pertain as well. Younger children seem to have a higher proportion of stories reflecting immanent justice, for instance. We are beginning to see examples of what Gregory Bateson noted: the leap children take when they get a sense of story.

We would like to do a long-term study on the development of sophistication in written storytelling, using a case study method. It would be interesting to analyse the appearance of Jungian archetypes or urban folklore motifs in these stories. Just what are the stages of development in storytelling, and when is it a child learns how to build in the internal detail that makes the story work *for the reader*? Are there parallels between Chicago area students and their counterparts who were subjects in James Britton's research? Can we find transitions from expressive to poetic writing in our stories? What do the results of our study imply for designing effective teaching strategies? What exactly did they do – those teachers whose students showed the greatest growth from the pre-test to the post-test?

These questions lead us to the part of this paper that is far more fun. It is not as intriguing to report what one knows or even to read what others have found out as it is to strike out to the edge and peer beyond into the realms of the unknown. Any teacher whose Psychology of Learning 101 is as encrusted in rust as mine knows the excitement brought by some of the new metaphors for brain function. The old taxonomies of Benjamin Bloom, Freud's trichotomy, or stimulus-response models pale beside some of the newer split brain research, which posits differing functions for the two hemispheres. We need to explore the relationship of right hemispheric function to Britton's spectator mode in language and the implications of this relationship for both the process of writing and the assessment of that process. For example, can we set up a testing situation, with appropriate controls, that will be sufficiently relaxed, supportive, and open-ended so we can generate the range of spectator role language Applebee was able to elicit in oral storytelling? Is there a correlation between a child's scoring high on one of Paul Torrence's Tests of Creative Thinking and the ability to synthesise story elements and imaginatively elaborate on them? Is there, for example, a relationship between the process of imaging or spatial awareness and the ability to describe or use analogies or compare and contrast, and is there any way to measure this relationship? We need to be much less simplistic in our descriptions of writing skill development. The findings of such researchers as Britton, Emig, and Graves about the writing process give us glimpses into how the mind works and into the role of choice and will in determining perception and response, which is then reflected in language development.

There is a whole new field – consciousness research – that, as a profession, we English teachers have not begun to assimilate. Advanced researchers on brain function now define brain activity as the ineffable subtle interactions among infinitesimal energy fields occurring in quantum space (Kenneth R. Pelletier, *Toward a Science of Consciousness*, Dell, 1978). It would seem

that neurologists are now able to show that the functioning of the brain may well be more like the affirmations of intuitive poets and Yogi meditators than like the simple input and output systems of the computers. When physicists are discovering what poets know, it is certainly time English teachers paid attention!

It is no wonder we find it difficult to figure out how to validly assess writing. It is an extension of that mysterious process of using words to make sense of our world. Evidently, the newer experiments in quantum physics confirm what a great deal of contemporary psychology supports, namely, the concept of a "constructional theory of perception" (K. H. Pribram, "Holonomy and Structure in the Organization of Perception," pre-print from the Department of Psychology, Stanford University, 1974). This is the kind of model Piaget posited in describing a child's development of language. Most researchers now agree that "we function psychologically by building systematic representations of experiences, which provide both an interpretation (or structuring) of the past and a system for anticipating the future" (Arthur Applebee, *The Child's Concept of Story*, University of Chicago). We literally see what we expect to see, and when a novel experience occurs, it is first integrated into what we expected; in other words, it is "defined as" something in our world. Then starts a more complex process, what Piaget calls "accommodation", which involves making the changes necessary in our representation of reality to interpret the new experience in the way we have just defined it.

Writing, like improvisational drama or good conversation, gives us time to look at our experience and thereby build a systematic representation of it. We need time and space to let new awareness to its work — to become fully assimilated, and then to effect necessary changes in our world view. Without this reflection we prematurely cut ourselves off from new experience because we do not trust our powers of integration. We fear the disequilibrium of not being able to make sense of what is happening to us. We need too desperately to find meaning. Because writing, like all of the arts, is a slow process of perception, reflection, playing out options, mucking through ideas and feelings, experimenting with expression — it has the potential for integration at ever-deeper levels. It is a process that engages us in ways we are at a loss to describe. But this process of writing, like all experience with language, can become a powerful source of strength, courage and pride.

The implications for teaching are clear. Human beings need to use writing — often and for a variety of reasons. They need real purposes and real audiences — the very ingredients no test situation can adequately provide. Testing may tell us what students are doing with writing, but it doesn't teach them how to do it. Perhaps we should relish the fact that some of the students we tested chose not to take our imposition of task seriously. They found the whole situation too unconnected with the real texture of their lives. They reminded us that we were *using* them for our own ends, and whenever we do that we deserve to be chastened.

So while we are advancing our careers by getting our programs validated and funded, let us never forget that our future on this planet is probably dependent upon the fact that there are young people out there at the other end of the testing process who refuse to play our game. They may even feel they are being treated as if they are the very paper on which the test is mimeographed, which likely explains why one high school student in one of our control schools was able to write this response to the stork expressive

test. His writing sample provides a fitting caveat for all mere researchers:

> Ouch! I wish she stop throwing me on the desks. The worse is yet to come, though, after they're through writing, all those kids will crumple me up and toss me with an apple core or bubble gum. I guess that's the life of a mimeograph. That lady says I'm a picture of a stork, whatever that is. All I know is that when those kids look at me they say, "God, is this stupid!" I don't know, whatever I am, I'm pretty ugly. I think I'd sooner be a picture of Miss February or a nice Da Vinci or something. Why they picked a stork is beyond me. That girl up there keeps staring at me. She must be really trying to get into this stork jazz. The kids in here are really dumb. Here they sit, concentrating on a picture of a dumb bird and pouring there hearts out onto a stupid sheet of paper. Don't they know that no one cares what they write! They only want to know if these kids can write! Oh well, what do I care. I'm only a mimeograph copy. A not very clear one at that. I wonder what they're saying about me. If one more kid talks about that stupid egg in the chevy, I'll wither up and die. I really wish they'd retire me. A mimeograph copy can get tired travelling around the country. I take a beating too! Those kids scribble everything all over me. So far that stork has had a beard, moustache, a dress and the strangest things hanging out of it's mouth.
>
> No body's looking at me now. They've passed the idea stage, they've forgotten all about their little mimeograph copy that gave them the idea for this great piece of classical literature. I feel used! Oh well, it's all in the life, who needs 'em. There'll be more of them. So long as there are government statistics on how many high school graduates can't write, they'll need me! . . .
>
> Wait! Their done, don't don't crumple me! Stop, you can't, I have dreams, plans . . ."

Changing the Model for "Examining" Achievements in Writing

John Dixon
Bretton Hall College of Higher Education,
and
Leslie Stratta
University of Birmingham

For the past hundred years there has been a pattern of believing that you could assess achievement at sixteen, seventeen or any other age by sitting pupils down for a 2-3 hour examination paper with a choice of essay topics.

What are the limitations to this model of assessing writing?

1. It restricts the kinds of writing sampled to one, or two at the most. The assumption is then made that the student is equally good (or bad) at all other kinds of writing.
2. It assesses unprepared writing on an unseen topic, not necessarily of any great interest or concern to the writer. Thus the results rarely if ever represent the potential achievements of the students involved – most of whom appear worse than they are.
3. It rules out any kinds of writing that involve the gathering of data, the sifting of other people's opinions, and – in general – the development of a self-selected investigation over a period of time.
4. It eliminates re-drafting and the kind of revision necessary when ideas and insights develop over time. Indeed, by feedback it suggests that a 45-60 minute burst is the norm in writing.
5. It does not allow the possibility of writing for a real audience. The material is destined for marking, and then the shredding machine.

So much for the examination; the results are if anything even less defensible under scrutiny. Out of all their toil and sweat examination boards, in general, seem unable to produce publicly a well-developed analysis of the qualities they are expecting, or even a set of examples to demonstrate what count as "standards". So far as teachers, students and the public are concerned, what is meant by a "pass" or a "grade" remains an ineffable idea in the mind of some chief examiner.

What are the alternatives? Student, teacher and public want to know that, over a period of time, a given individual has developed the ability to write for a range of purposes and audiences. It will be fair to sample the individual's peak achievements over that period, and to ensure that the writing is undertaken in encouraging contexts – with appropriate time, materials and preliminary advice available, and opportunities to revise and develop early drafts. These are the conditions assumed by most writers (including ourselves at this moment).

Over the last ten years or so, a numbr of examination boards in various

English-speaking countries have begun to set up systems of assessment on this model. We believe it is time to take stock of their achievements, and to consider the policy implications for the examining of English.

One of the important effects of their alternative model has been to make available, for the first time, "exemplar" folders of students' writing. These have immediate implications. First, they suggest the kinds of positive achievement that students are capable of, according to their current mastery of language. In effect, they illustrate how imaginative teaching can adapt the tasks suggested, or discussed with the student, to bring out the best in the individual – his thinking and imaginative insight into life. The regular termly meetings held with the board by the participating schools in England are therefore a natural exchange for such ideas in teaching and learning.

These meetings have a further function, too. As folders come to be used to establish, and demonstrate, what is meant by "standards", it is much simpler to involve teachers in the participating schools in final assessment. Instead of trying to train them to imagine, and memorise, some ineffable grade "level", the board can now ask them to match a student's writing against one or other of the exemplar folders. And the ability to do so reliably can more easily be checked.

However, it is the third effect of assessment folders that is likely to be of the greatest long term importance to English teachers. In all production of language, people are capable of succeeding to some degree. What is achieved on one occasion may be more elementary, on another more complex, but both may be of value, and useful. The question, then, is what line(s) of development a teacher may hope for in a given student's writing?

The notion of writing development, of "staging points" in individual achievement, is still relatively unexplored among English teachers – though it is fundamental to teaching, one would think. Exemplar folders in themselves cannot offer direct evidence of development, of course: however, as one reads through pieces of the same kind at successive grade levels, it does not take much teacherly imagination to recall individual students who have made steps such as are suggested there. And overall, as mastery of an increasing range of writing begins to show, a kind of map emerges on which a teacher might hope to chart the progress of each student.

The feedback from this alternative system of assessment, then, is to challenge the teacher to understand more fully the processes of development (in language, thought and feeling) that underly progress in writing. As an alternative to coaching for a 2-3 hour paper, it seems an indisputable gain.

In order to support the work of the teachers and boards involved in this alternative approach, the current writers are engaged in a two-stage project. As a first stage we have set ourselves the task of looking in turn at each main kind of writing, trying to point to the features and qualities which characterise clearly distinguishable "staging points" in what is achieved – from the most elementary to the most complex (at 16+).

Our provisional findings to date seem to be entirely in sympathy with the work described at the Ottowa international conference by Andrew Wilkinson, Lee Odell and Bruce Bennett. Indeed we hope to rely on them and other colleagues internationally for the criticism and extension of our current ideas.

Briefly, we have begun by looking at two kinds of writing, narratives based on personal experience, and arguments about moral or social issues.

Let us begin by considering personal narratives.

Narratives Based on Personal Experience

Telling stories about ourselves and others is one of the early purposes that we all learn to use extended stretches of language for, and it remains vitally important throughout our lives. For a long time teachers of English have recognised the value of getting this kind of experience into words, first in oral story telling and then, additionally, in writing. It is not surprising, therefore, to find this kind of writing forming a regular component of exemplar folders at 16+. Yet, development in using writing to explore and understand personal experience is very uneven by this age. What different kinds of achievements can be expected, and how can they all be described, from the most elementary to the most complex? In this paper we offer a provisional way of answering these key questions, for discussion, criticism and modification.

We have found in close scrutiny of the texts that the following four questions are central to our argument and effectively form a set of criteria:

1. What kinds of ordering or re-ordering occur as the writer imaginatively recovers the events of the past – and to what effect? For example, is the sequence retraced in an elementary way, or are there more complex transformations? Are past events re-organised at any point from a later position, with the benefit of hindsight?
2. Is the writer automatically assuming or taking for granted a reader who is already acquainted with the setting, or the characters, or the events? Does he implicitly take into account readers without exactly similar experience, and possibly with different attitudes or points of view?
3. Does the writer remain largely or entirely an unselfconscious egocentric, or is there a more comprehensive perspective in which thoughts and feelings of other participants are more fully acknowledged or realised? (This is a question about the authorial point of view, which may at times be ironically at odds with the "I" of the story.)
4. What actual or potential understanding of the uses of language could be pointed to as significant? In what ways is the writer beginning to show significant forms of control, technique or awareness in the use of language?

In answering all four questions we hope to be able to show the set of features in the language which support or validate our judgements. We realise that answers to any one question frequently interlock with the answers to others. Nevertheless, in analysing our examples we shall follow this framework, for the reader's convenience, indicating the focal questions in shorthand form.

There is time to look at just one narrative example today. It may well be that this represents a bridging point between an elementary stage in narrative that is very close to adolescent oral story telling, and the development of a more complex extension into kinds of writing that are closer to literature.

My First Date

My friend and I were sitting down at the Youth Club. We were very bored and were just staring at the pictures on the wall.

All of a sudden my eyes caught two girls whom I had not seen before, they were both about John's and my age and were good looking.

Then John gave me a nudge and said, "Have you seen those two girls who have just come in?"

"Yes", I replied.

"Wonder what their names are", I said enquiringly.

"Come on lets find out", was John's answer to that.

John was not very talkative when it came to girls so I could see I was the one who would have to do all the talking on our part. So I started the conversation with the girls by asking them if they wanted a drink, but then I felt a little bit stupid when I saw that they already had drinks. But I pretended not to notice and they replied, "No thanks".

The girls had different coloured hair and one was a little smaller than the other but they both looked the same other wise.

Our first advance on them did not seem to work, so I interrupted their conversation once more and asked their names. The taller of the two answered my question.

"My name's Julie and my friend's name is Carol, what's your names?"

"My name's Steve and this is John".

Just then the lights in the Youth Club flickered which was the sign that the Youth Club was about to close.

The two girls were just about to leave the bar, so I asked them if we could walk them home. They both smiled and said "Yes".

But as they answered I wondered what I had done, what if they lived miles away, so I quickly said "Where do you live?"

Julie answered and said, "Not far we only live on the Manor".

I felt a bit of relief as it was not too far from where John and I lived.

So we set off from the Youth Club, with the two girls walking in front of us.

Then John asked me which of the girls I liked best, and I replied, "I like both of them".

John replied, "Well you are not going out with both of them."

"I wish you would not be so daft", I said. "What I really mean is that I like both of them but I only want to go out with one of them".

I told John to go and ask them if they would go out with us. When he came back, he said they would and we need not choose between them as they had chosen already. I was to go out with Julie.

As we arrived near their homes we left John and Carol because Julie lived on the next road from Carol.

I stood with Julie outside their house and started talking. I asked her which school she went to and all that.

Julie asked me if I was coming out the following night, and I said that John and I would see them at the Youth Club at about half past seven, Julie said, "I will have to go now", so we kissed and she went in.

I met up with John further up the road and we both agreed it was a night well spent.

What kinds of ordering? The events are recreated in a sustained and coherent story, stretching well beyond what is usually expected in gossip. The main sequence accurately retraces the chronological order of events, but, in this case, interwoven with the sequence are some of the narrator's thoughts and feelings at the time. These look forward and back, interpreting sections of the action from the narrator's then point of view. Thus, "John was not very talkative when it came to girls" explains the narrator's taking the initiative, while "Our first advance on them did not seem to work" sums

up what has just happened, and prompts a new action. (The difficulty with tense suggests that the writer is still learning to master this kind of feature.) As a result the story begins to fall into episodes, sections with their own internal coherence and interpreted significance. It is in keeping with this that the narrator ends with the overall rounding-off comment (then): "we both agreed it was a night well spent". The sentiment may seem rather formal (18th century?) but the intention is clear. Narrative is felt to be not a skeleton of events but significant action ("As they answered I wondered what I had done".) The narrator is beginning to interpret life, as it occurs.

How comprehensive a perspective? Beginning with "My friend and I" is not necessarily a sign of egocentricity, of course: an author may deliberately postpone the characterisation of his personae in such a story, if he chooses. However, in this case, there is evidence to suggest that that wasn't the reason. The girls, for instance, "had different coloured hair and one was a little smaller than the other but they both looked the same other wise". Admittedly, he could have been bowled over, incapable of registering detail, but the use of "different" and "the same" betrays an egocentric participation rather than a deliberate author, we would say.

There is further clear evidence of unconscious egocentricity when the pronouns shift without warning: "As we arrived near their homes we left John and Carol". The first "we" is "John and I" (possibly plus the two girls), whereas the second is "Julie and I".

What sort of readers? There are mixed impressions here. An author who refers to "*the* Youth Club" and "*the* Manor" seems to be assuming that his reader is familiar with the places intended. On the other hand, he does realise that when the lights flicker he needs to explain that this "was the sign that the Youth Club was about to close".

Similarly when his comments reveal his own gaucheness ("I felt a little bit stupid when I saw they already had drinks", or "I wondered what I had done, what if they lived miles away"), the reader cannot help wondering whether the author (now) is not a shade amused at what he did then. Nevertheless, overall the external reader would probably like to have had more from the author (as against the participants): a fuller sense of the people involved, the settings, and the interactions.

It is a story that rings true, seems faithful to the events and perhaps unselfconsciously betrays more than the author is aware of.

What significant uses of language? Here again there is an interesting mixture. Let's look in more detail at the way the story moves at times, the sequence from the opening of the story to the girls' "no thanks", for example. There is something very elementary about the pattern:

My friend and I	were sitting
We	were very bored, and
we	were just staring . . .
two girls	not seen before
they	were both about John's and my age and
(they)	were good looking.

This is a characteristic use of language. Sections of the narrative are built up of sequences of simple statements such as these; there is one nugget of new information per clause, as if an accretive method was being used to add one simple unit on to the next. Is it an elementary way of maintaining control of the organising, both in terms of the language and in

terms of the experience? Maybe this results in the set towards simple chronological ordering of events that we find in this piece – and many others like it.

We have found only one point where the author explicitly shows contemporaneity of events ("as they answered, I wondered what I had done").

The accretive method gives the writing in part the feeling of speech. Yet there are also, by way of contrast, noticeable literary echoes, suggesting a wider repertoire the writer may be learning to draw on:

- said enquiringly
- was John's answer to that
- our first advance on them

Phrases such as these suggest a certain formality of style, an impression supported by the fact that, where we might expect ellipsis, redundant information is retained:

- Just then the lights in the Youth Club flickered, which was the sign that *the Youth Club* was about to close.

The odd thing is that there is some veering between informal and formal style. For example, ellipsis is in fact nicely used to suggest informal speech:

- Wonder what their names are?

Is this a writer still trying to master the degree of formality and relationship with the reader that he wants to set up in this kind of writing?

Certainly, within the limits that he sets himself, he is a confident handler of the written medium. The sentence is clearly recognised, spelling has been mastered, and detailed quotations from speech are handled with ease. In addition the episodic structure of the story is clearly indicated by paragraphs.

In all, are we seeing a writer with limited but developing perceptions about his own experience, using his linguistic resources at full stretch? (The folder helps to answer such a question.)

Let us imagine for a moment that this was a peak achievement of the writer during his sixteenth year. If so, we want to find out what lies behind that student at earlier stages in his development in personal narrative, and what may lie immediately ahead if the right opportunities occur. The types of feature that seem central to describing his current "staging point" suggest, as you see, that stories of this kind will give clues about broader forms of persoanl maturity. This does not make English teaching any easier – it would be simpler to return to coaching in the rhetorical skills needed for five paragraph, routine essays. Nevertheless, if English teaching may be concerned with things of such importance, isn't it more worthwhile?

Moral argument

We turn to moral and social argument next because it seems, like narrative, of central importance in the intellectual and emotional development of students. Clearly it has a vital role in many subjects besides English; nevertheless we suggest that moral argument is inevitably of concern to the English teacher – one has only to think of the moral and social issues infused in literature. Interestingly enough, though, the qualities to be looked for when students take up moral issues in their writing do not seem to have been considered in the same depth as those in narrative.

At this point, then, our position is more provisional; what we offer is a discussion of the characteristics that might be expected in a "mature" moral argument.

In a relatively hierarchical and static society it may be felt that many of the major moral issues are clear cut and the answers given. However, in a rapidly changing society such as our own, traditional moral viewpoints are constantly being challenged and reconsidered. It is therefore essential that, particularly in adolescence, young students are given the opportunity to reflect on such issues and argue them through. What are the qualities of mind – of thought, attitude, insight and language – that the teacher of English might be hoping to encourage, in helping students to argue rationally and to some effect? Any moral or social question worth arguing about inevitably involves a range of issues, not all of them by any means well formulated by the opinion makers of our society. So a first question might be: how *complex* is the student's construction of what might be at issue, and what range of aspects is he at present conscious of and taking account of?

This question emphasises the need to move beyond an egocentric simplification of the problem, and to recognise that there may be opposing, even conflicting, interests. This calls for sympathetic penetration and analysis.

A second, and parallel, question, is concerned with the *coherence* of that student's construction. How well does he interrelate the various cross-currents and achieve some overview that acknowledges the complexity they suggest? To tackle this calls for intelligent synthesis and shaping.

Of course, there is argument that is carried on for sheer enjoyment, where an essential aim is to score points off your opponent – as in formal debate. The kind of argument, however, which we are presently considering is usually only undertaken from a concern to come to terms with problems that seem to the student profound and far-reaching in their consequences. So a third question arises: what signs of commitment and *integrity* can one discern in the written argument? Even if we disagree with the writer, can we take him or her seriously and, in part or as a whole, respect their genuine concern to understand? A further test of the writer's genuine concern is his willingness to acknowledge the implications which follow from the positions he is arriving at.

What we have assumed so far is a student working out a personal view point, possibly with little or no awareness of the views already expressed by other people. When the student has to take account of other people's constructions of the problem, new demands have to be met. This leads to a further set of questions: How carefully does the writer *consider* the variety of *opposing viewpoints* and arguments? In doing so, is the writer prepared to *acknowledge*, or even *concede*, elements of an opponent's position that seem to deserve it? *How well and appropriately* does he *counter* opposing viewpoints, assumptions and arguments?

Finally, written argument can take the form of a search to find an answer worth having (with the emphasis on process), so the moral task may not necessarily be completed: the writer may end with further questions, feeling that something has been gained, but having to acknowledge tentativeness and perhaps some uncertainty. This may have happened only too rarely in the past in the English classroom but it seems an important fact of life.

Equally, the writer may feel that a more complex understanding has been reached and wish to communicate this to others (an emphasis on product).

What remains to be done?

We are currently testing these initial criteria against samples of students' writing and hope shortly to publish research reports on this work. Moreover, these are just two of a wider range of kinds of writing. We are already confident that existing exemplar folders by no means realise the sort of range that may be possible. This calls for a second stage in our investigation, when we shall be working with groups of teachers in a form of action research.

In presenting these early ideas to the international conference, then, we are particularly hoping to contact research groups and teacher study groups in other parts of the world who would wish to exchange research papers and, if possible, offer detailed criticism of our own papers. Better still, if this kind of analysis is, as we believe, in the spirit of other investigations of writing development already going on internationally, we wonder if the moment has come for some kind of joint effort among teachers of English to replace the old exam model by the far more valuable task of charting students' progress.

Defensible and Indefensible: an Assessment of English Examining

John A. Hay
Department of English, University of Western Australia

Tristram's injunction to the readers of his frustrated autobiography, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, seems to me to offer an apposite epigraph for the continuing debate on the examining of English: "————O my countrymen!————be nice;————be cautious of your language;————and never, O! never let it be forgotten upon what small particles your eloquence and your fame depend" (II, p. 7).

The debate has been going on long enough for those of us whose business is words to have discerned not only its familiar strategies but also its rhetoric. The strategies are dialectical and the rhetoric is the rhetoric of opposition: essentially, each antagonist subtly misdescribes his opponent's position and by certain metaphoric procedures seeks to establish the terms of the argument in words and images that will guarantee his own victory. Thus, what is often claimed to be the triumph of reason or logic may be no more than evidence of the loser's acquiescence to a vocabulary which is inimical to the very propositions he seeks to advance.

To insist upon the terminology in which an argument is to be conducted is not merely to define the ground rules of the contest but to ensure victory. Perhaps better than anyone else, Jonathan Swift has demonstrated the truth of this assertion. The grotesque solution to Ireland's troubles that is recommended by the modest proposer – kill and eat a number of the children – is a bizarre but an inevitable consequence of allowing the argument to proceed instead of rejecting its first premise, that any solution should be "fair, cheap and easy".

Swift, of course, allows us the laughter of superiority: we see through the modest proposer and the sordid little trinity, "fair, cheap and easy", from which he hopes to derive moral actions. And we laugh at his naïveté in believing us to be so ingenuous as to follow him. But when the debate concerns the examining of English it invokes assumptions about the very nature of language, and the strategies and rhetoric employed are at once more subtle and more coercive in their effects. Nor can we easily attain that objectifying distance from our own prejudices that we more readily achieve from those of the modest proposer.

At present it would seem, paradoxically, that the most cogent arguments are advanced by the least powerful group. For a variety of reasons, more social and political than educational, public examinations are not only a persistent aspect of the final stages of secondary school education but the model of the external public examinations has dominated those other modes of assessment which are ambiguously described as continuous assessment.

Opponents of terminal public examinations (the pun is inescapable) tend to seek to replace them by a series of internal tests which are no more than miniatures of the despised original. Credentialism and the now-fashionable notion of accountability may explain this phenomenon: everyone seeks reliability of assessment and external, "objective" examinations lay claim to high reliability. What happens, all too often, is that the teacher assumes the role and adopts the practices of public examiner. Yet for the most part public examiners of final-year English students in this country offer little theoretical justification for the kinds of examinations they set and, equally alarmingly, seem oblivious to the implications of the results they achieve.

Defences of examinations are often characterised by anecdotal yearnings for a golden age – usually the examiner's refurbished adolescence as a brilliant school boy or girl – by recourse to ambiguous but emotionally powerful concepts like values, standards and the like (not that these terms are in any way contemptible or irrelevant, but they should be fully exposited in order that their implications should be fully understood), or by a display of authority, or by reference to a Mr Jorkins figure who, although absent, is declared to be the final arbiter of such matters. (Employers, the government, the university, the system are all invoked as surrogate Jorkins figures.) Two eighteenth-century apothegms seem to me too often to describe the stance of English examiners. The first is from Pope's *An Essay on Man:*

> "Whatever is, is right;"

the second is Dr Johnson's remark to Boswell on hanging:

> ". . . Sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully."

It is certainly a reflection of the present state of the debate that the critics of examinations have herded their opponents into a tight intellectual corner: the dogs of liberalism have cornered the bear of reaction and all he can do is snarl and slaver. Ironically, though, this bear retains a lot of power and may well be complacent in the belief that the dogs have no real teeth. I am indulging my metaphoric bestiary to underline the confrontationist tenor of the present debate, a tenor which seems to me likely to be unproductive and, often, seriously distorting.

It may well be that implicated commentators should not aim at discerning what is or is not defensible in the examining of English. As head of a large university English department, it is obvious that my business is with words; and as chief examiner of matriculation-level English for some thirteen years it will be evident to you that I have not seen the teaching of English as irreconcilable with its examining. I propose to generalise from my particular experiences and research, to offer as an imperfect paradigm the example of a public examination of English taken by most final-year secondary-school students in Western Australia. And I hope to discern in my role as an examiner of English at least the vestigial outlines of a dilemma which confronts (or should confront) anyone who seeks to examine English.

Although my own university *normally* requires matriculants to pass the English examination (that is, to be among those 70-odd per cent of candidates who gain a grade of more than 50 per cent), aggregated scores from five or six subject examinations most decisively determine university entry. So, at least for the present, I can put the simplistic pass/fail dichotomy to one side.

I would like to set aside another matter. Although tertiary admissions examinations ostensibly seek to elicit predictive indices of a student's likely

performance at a tertiary institution, very few of the presenting candidates go on to tertiary-level English courses. Moreover, it is statistically clear that the predictive value of a single examination, notoriously low in any case, is less significant than that of a range of examinations. And since the widely attested backwash effect of examinations clearly pervades the classroom it is obvious that while the examination is *de jure* at least, a tertiary selection test, it has a *de facto* influence on how a subject is taught at school. Its real defensibility (or indefensibility) lies in the extent to which it validly and reliably assesses the extent to which students have achieved the general and particular aims of the syllabus.

Although as English teachers and examiners we are accustomed to see ourselves as having a special place in the world of education – some of us, indeed, behave at times as *lusus naturae* – I suggest that we are confronted as examiners by the same three questions that confront our colleagues in History, Mathematics or Chemistry.

- What *kinds* of questions can be asked?
- Are the questions worth asking?
- How can the answers to these questions be assessed?

Of course, these questions neither fit into nor establish discrete categories: their interrelatedness is at once evident and necessary. But they do permit a coherent discussion of the problem of examining and by their general nature allow comparisons with other subjects.

A tacit, quasi-legal relationship links examinations and syllabuses. In Mathematics, this is easy to illustrate: one may not ask a student to show mastery of quadratic equations in order to test a syllabus which calls for the study of Euclidean geometry. Nor in English Literature would one invite comments on *Hamlet* when *Twelfth Night* had been prescribed – although the extent to which quantifiable evidence of a student's knowledge of a particular literary text determines the grade awarded is highly debatable. But in English courses such as the one I am alluding to, the language of the syllabus is hardly prescriptive although it is subtly coercive. The affective dimension of English studies is put forward in decidedly slippery abstractions: at times it seems that the ineffable is being skirted in a manner that is reminiscent of D. H. Lawrence's attempts to find linguistic correlatives for states of heightened sexual excitement. In our reluctance to narrowly prescribe, circumvent or in any way straightjacket the creative possibilities of language we might render ourselves vulnerable to charges of obscurantism or mere irrelevance. Just what, for example, does Frank Whitehead (1969) *mean* when he asserts:

> In reality, the main objective of English teaching is to improve our' pupils' ability to use their active language as a means of dealing with the experiences of living. The techniques assume importance only insofar as they facilitate or impede this all-important process. They are, in fact, ancillary techniques, and we must not allow the ignorant or the bigoted to set them up as significant objectives in their own right.

Trenchant stuff, but the combative name-calling is, for me at least, disquieting. And it borders on mere tendentiousness to assert the intellectual primacy of a subject which seems in no way knowable except by intuition or by Shamanism. But if we are able to recommend specific texts and to encourage identifiable writing skills, if we can develop students' capacities for communicating their affective responses, it follows as a corollary that

we can define our objectives. Of course, merely mechanistic views of language may be objected to; but savage indignation at those who seek to define language as a mere collection of grammatical *things* ought not so disable us that we cannot express our perceptions of language in other than ineffable terminology. Are not paper tigers only set up by those who can't articulate their own position?

But this is a rhetorical question, and I am defining objectives by stealth and by implication. Let me resume my theme: what kinds of questions might we ask in an examination of English?

The problem is interestingly encapsulated in a discussion paper circulated by other Western Australians, who cite F. Whitehead:

> In an individualised subject like English which embraces affective characteristics as well as cognitive indicators of performance, the assessment program confronts particular problems. A comprehensive program of assessment which samples all aspects of language development is not possible; a finite, closed system of assessment is inappropriate; the validity of judgements made is difficult to sustain and a relatively low order of confidence can be placed in some of them.
>
> The first derives from the recognition that some aspects of competence in English are susceptible of objective assessment, but others are not. This is especially true of the affective characteristics. Even if they can be appreciated or evaluated according to subjective criteria, they cannot be adequately categorised or coded. In effect, they are unmeasurable. (Tomlinson *et. al.*, 1980: p. 6)

Whitehead uses value-laden terms to describe the problem, thereby establishing further difficulties. I notice that a "comprehensive programme" is held to be inaccessible, but this may be more than a truism. And this comprehensiveness is yearned for, the nostalgia exacerbated by a dismal alternative: a "finite, closed system", declared to be "inappropriate" and of dubious "validity". The case is being argued by dialectical oppositions: "open" is contrasted with the more pejorative "closed"; "infinite" with "finite"; "valid" with "reliable"; and, implicitly at least, "good" with "bad". It is as if Hegel were ordering the debate, or even Kierkegaard; but the synthesis and the transcendence are deferred indefinitely and certain conclusions are made to seem inevitable, such as: "Either we jettison validity in favour of reliability, or we jettison reliability in favour of validity" (Tomlinson *et. al.*, 1980: p. 6).

Although much of what Whitehead says elsewhere strikes me as cogent, this statement seems to me hard to defend. I suggest that an English syllabus does seek to inculcate specific as well as general skills and that both of these may be assessed with a high degree of validity *and* reliability. And I further suggest that the claimed affective/cognitive dichotomy does not necessarily vitiate any attempt at examining English. I do *not* imply that everything that the study of English promotes or engenders can be measured by an examination, nor have I heard such a claim advanced. But certain significant and defensible assessments are possible; and the modes of assessment are susceptible of close analysis. In short, it is possible to identify with some confidence what is defensible and what is not defensible in the examining of English.

My first and second questions — What kinds of questions may be asked? Are the questions worth asking? — are already interwoven. The number of

activities encouraged or recommended by the English syllabus is clearly very considerable but an evaluative taxonomy is enforced by the second question. Upon this evaluative taxonomy is imposed those taxonomies which differentiate levels of tasks or skills, but I do not want to reiterate Bloom's, and other already familiar, findings. Nor should it be assumed that by seeking to deal in taxonomies I am eschewing the affective dimension of language. An examiner who seeks to assess, say, a student's comprehension skills does not merely consider the vocabulary level of the passage that students are asked to read, but its interest level, its familiarity or unfamiliarity, its intrinsic literary qualities, even its likely psychological effects upon the imprisoned candidate.

The exigencies of time and space impose limitations upon the scope of this paper as well as upon examinations themselves. Because of this, I would like to focus my discussion upon the examination of reading and comprehension skills. Since a crucial sentence in the aims of the English course under discussion refers to "the ability . . . to write English effectively and to read English with understanding and appreciation" it is clear that the examiner's brief is already defined. And since the syllabus recommends certain books, or kinds of books, his responsibilities are more precisely identified. For example, his choice of passages is restricted to the generic categories described by the syllabus; in an eclectic syllabus, however, this restriction may be merely nominal. Moreover, since no single mode of reading is prescribed, the examiner must ask a question that not only permits but guarantees a range of responses. And that range must allow for different levels of ability and different *modes* of response.

What is often overlooked in the examining of English is that not all the questions are posed in an explicit way. In a comprehension test, it is obvious that a candidate's first task is to read the given passage. And without an examiner's asking a single explicit question he has, in consequence of setting the passage, established a subtle and, I suggest, defensible test of important skills. The art of reading incorporates tests of verbal and grammatical differentiation: before the explicit questions are asked, a hierarchy of sorts has been established which differentiates those who effortlessly assimilate the complex nuances of tone and subtext from those who struggle in their minds to see the passage in terms of a mere precis or paraphrase.

To recur to that dubious affective/cognitive dichotomy, it is clear that the questions themselves should afford students not only the opportunity to describe in words their understanding of the passage but also to exposit their evaluative, subjective response to it. Moreover, since it is not useful to describe the activities of reading and writing in merely convergent terms, the question itself must explicitly acknowledge the nature of the tasks or skills being assessed. Thus, merely to ask a student to paraphrase or parse the passage may be indefensible since the former useful skill may have been subsumed by the very task of making sense of the passage while the latter skill might better be examined in another way. To put it simply, the questions should afford a student the opportunity to demonstrate a *range* of skills that is not unnecessarily or arbitrarily truncated. That range may be either explicitly or implicitly described in the syllabus, but examiners who seek narrowly to define it may be shown to be acting indefensibly by ignoring the primacy of the syllabus. Should one, for example, ask a student to read a passage and then describe in continuous prose the

author's use of participal phrases? Obviously not, unless the syllabus made it clear that this was the way in which English should be studied.

By now it will be clear that my third question – How can the answers to these questions be assessed? – is obtruding upon my discussion.

It seems to me a fair criticism of many English examinations that the pessimism engendered by my third question often grotesquely distorts responses to the first question – What *kinds* of questions can be asked? – and leads to an avoidance of the second question – Are the questions worth asking? The myth that subjectivity among examiners is dangerous and uncontrollable has had disastrous consequences. In the firm conviction that this myth is a reality, examiners too easily ask questions which imply an ideal answer, preferably of a wholly quantifiable kind. Thus reading and writing are examined as if they led to no more than merely mechanical tasks: count the adjectives or gerundial forms, spot the dyslogistic syllogism, differentiate the Latinate from the Anglo-Saxon-derived nouns. And so on.

But examiners, who should be teachers, are capable of much more than this. Too often, they are constrained by the contexts of incompetence. I know of examiners who direct their assistants to mark with "complete objectivity", to distribute their range of marks in a finite way and, more insidiously, to evaluate a candidate's answer in terms of its distance from an ideal answer or by reference to a mechanical form: one mark off for every grammatical infelicity, two marks off for persistent misspelling. It is impossible to parody how bad things can be, since the evidence is so painfully familiar to us.

But there is no reason why examiners cannot read answers in the same spirit that the English syllabus describes the subject itself. Nor is subjective, general-impression or holistic marking devoid of statistically defensible reliability.

Of course, just as not all English teachers do not make good examiners, so not all modes of examining are equally defensible. Those examining modes that are philosophically and methodologically consonant with the aims and syllabus of a course are logically to be preferred to those that are not. That, I would think, is self-evident. But ludicrous modes of examining English persist. This, of course, is a long tradition, beginning with that first university-level English examination paper, which included the amazing question: "Why is D a perfect letter?" (Palmer, 1965).

What I propose to discuss in the latter part of this paper are research findings into a particular mode of examining English. Stated simply, my aim is to suggest that the polemical dichotomies of validity/reliability, subjective/objective and affective/cognitive are less forbidding than we have allowed them to become: in short, that defensible modes of examining transcend these dichotomies.

In suggesting that the defensibility of the kinds of questions an examiner may ask is determined by an analysis of the consonance of the question with the syllabus I have done no more than reiterate a commonplace about validity. But I am being more adventurous in asserting that the validity of modes of assessment is determined in precisely the same way. The syllabus, I suggest, defines its own appropriate examining mode (or modes). Let me illustrate the contention in a practical way by varying my third question – How can the answers . . . be assessed? – to Who will do the assessing?

Since the examination under discussion, the Western Australian tertiary admissions examination of English, is *de facto*, more obviously a final

examination of a secondary school course than a university entrance test, its examining procedures should reflect this: teachers should be the examiners. They, clearly, have had the task of implementing the syllabus and, axiomatically, have the greatest knowledge not only of the ways in which the course's aims are susceptible of being achieved but of the levels of achievement that can reasonably be expected.

Not all teachers make good examiners. It is one thing to insist that those who assess a course ought to be implicated in that course, at least to the extent of being finely aware of its implicit as well as explicit aims, but it is naïveté to assume that complicity guarantees reliability. Quantitatively expressed, teachers who seek to examine the English course under discussion must demonstrate a capacity to mark a random batch of some 250 scripts, under controlled conditions, using a marking scale of 0-15. Their distribution of marks should approximate a normal distribution, they should demonstrate a capacity to recognise the onset of fatigue and, most crucially, they should be capable of mark/re-mark self-consistency or reliability of f.8 or better. In case this sounds an inaccessible ideal, let me assure you that no difficulty has been experienced in recruiting markers who achieve these standards.

It is the responsibility of the chief examiner to maximise the reliability of his marking procedures at the same time as he maintains their validity. Some of the variables that obviously militate against reliability are easily controlled by the use of congenial marking centres, adequate remuneration, flexible timetables that allow for fatigue-factors to be minimised and so forth. But the crucial variable is the examiner himself. And this raises perhaps the most important question of all: should the examiners be constrained by a mechanical marking technique (trait scoring, sentence combinations, and grammatical skills *et al*) which, while ensuring reliability deny the subjective aspects of English examining. The answer is no; the syllabus seeks to inculcate a heterogeneity of writing modes; many of the questions reflect the importance of a sense of audience as a determinant of the appropriate style of writing, and the imposition of a marking scale which implies a monodic view of writing, and which cannot allow for dissimilarities, is clearly indefensible. Moreover, since a sense of the examiner as audience demonstrably inhibits the imaginative variety of examinees' responses – passive forms, latinate nouns, self-conscious logicality too often characterise examination scripts – any marking technique that exacerbates this tendency ought only cautiously to be approached.

Nor should examiners be instructed to eschew mechanical marking techniques merely in order to replace them by the notion of an "ideal" answer. This is often the only result of those preliminary sessions in which examiners collectively discuss the implications of the examination questions. One consequence of these so-called moderating sessions is the introduction into an examiner's marking pattern of a statistically significant aberration which can diminish his self-consistency. Relatively sophisticated statistical indices of marking patterns are not difficult to obtain and those occasions where self-consistency is lowest are readily discernible. In the initial marking stages, and after the onset of fatigue, aberrant patterns of marking are most conspicuous. What this signifies, of course, is that markers do establish a pattern which is, in a sense, self-justificatory: when they are confident that their holistic grades are defensible they attain higher levels of reliability than when they seek to award grades by reference to a set of directions that

are not necessarily congenial to them. And since self-consistency is crucial, it is the chief examiner's responsibility, in both a statistical and a psychological sense, to maintain his examiners' belief in their own capacities.

Obviously, multiple-marking procedures are required to minimise excessive levels of intra-marker variance. At the simplest level, "hard" markers can be paired with "soft" markers. But more sophisticated procedures are almost equally accessible and have the desirable concommitant effect of freeing individual markers from the fear that their grade alone will bless or damn a candidate.

Having revealed what might seem like a slavish devotion to holistic or general impression marking, I would like to reiterate that I have recommended its defensibility for the two parts of the English examination paper under discussion that call for responses in continuous prose and that invite a wide divergence of possible modes of writing. Where all students respond, in ways they consider appropriate, to the same question or questions, the defensibility of holistic marking is greater than when, as on the second section of this English examination, a wide range of questions is set. In some of these questions, a more specific response is required than in others; that is, the rubric of certain questions defines within quite precise boundaries the nature of an appropriate response. In such cases, other marking modes may be called for. And that is a problem of very considerable magnitude.

Pragmatically, one kind of solution is possible: examiners whose job it is to assess scripts that seek to demonstrate a variety of writing and reading skills may best be employed by marking sections of papers rather than the whole paper. Clearly, this will minimise the powerful "halo" effect of the impression created by the first question, but it will preclude the possibility of an examiner's assessing the range of a candidate's writing skills. Unless, of course, the papers are to be re-marked with this mode of assessment in mind, adding an overall grade to a series of fractional grades.

Not all variations in the modes of English examining derive from mere expediency: the subject itself is a many-sided one and demands a many-sided mode of assessment. This ought not seem as surprising as certain raised eyebrows suggest it is: it is, after all, a commonplace of examination critics that the intrinsic diversity of English is denied by most examinations of the subject. It is, alas, an equally commonplace response of examiners to deflect such criticisms by pointing to a wide choice of topics offered to candidates or by remorselessly increasing the duration of the examination paper. To ask a student to write three essays on different topics is, generally, to elicit the same information three times; unless, of course, the examination merely tests factual knowledge, in which case I would concede that the same skills are only repeated 2.5 times, facts occupying so minimal a proportion of most modes of discourse. What is required is real variety of assessment, not mere examining tautologies.

An examiner who is sufficiently aware of this imperative is almost inevitably involved with various taxonomic schemata. In the paper under discussion, for example, reading and comprehension skills are apparently tested twice: initially in the first and then in the third sections of the paper. But the first section is equally a writing test and a comprehension test: the skills measured may be characterised as divergent, associative and affective, although the writing task which enables these skills to be displayed and assessed derives from a close-reading, cognitive activity. In the third

section of the paper, a multiple-choice test of comprehension, essentially convergent skills are assessed. But, as in the first section, a reading task is used as a covert mode of assessment before the overt questions are asked.

Having reprimanded the use of convenient dichotomies earlier in this paper, might I cautiously introduce one at this stage? The skills that the multiple-choice test measures are essentially of a *decoding* kind, by comparison with the *encoding* skills asked for in essay-type questions, just as the modes of assessment undertaken by multiple-choice tests concern reading/vocabulary skills rather than writing skills, although the two are closely interrelated. Moreover, since the syllabus defines reading as well as writing skills, it would seem indefensible not to assess both. I must, of course, freely acknowledge that the present examination indefensibly fails to test spoken English just as it fails to sample extended and revised samples of writing. But those skills are not as far as I know readily assessable in an examination room. And it is not the fault of those who compile the written examination that other, valid and reliable modes of assessment, preferably conducted by teachers throughout the course, do not form part of a student's final grade. That seems to me a real and a serious problem.

Like written examinations of English, multiple-choice tests are more abused than well-used. Expensive to construct and indefensible if used without pre-testing to ensure the high reliability for which they are too easily praised, multiple-choice tests offer examiners an excellent opportunity to assess discriminatory skills that English courses seek to inculcate. Nor are the skills that may be assessed merely mechanical: vocabularly tests, syntactical tests and logical tests are the familiar hardware of multiple-choice tests. But if that is all they comprise then they, too, are both redundant and in some ways indefensible. It is beyond dispute that the use of multiple-choice tests frees examiners of written papers from the debilitating constraints of checking a student's knowledge of the mechanics of language: it would be a waste of time and money to employ an examiner to do less reliably what a computer-scored test could do so easily. But multiple-choice tests may be used with the same high level of reliability in testing a student's knowledge of the tone, structure, point of view, sense of an audience, language texture of passages of writing, or to test a student's capacity to compare and contrast specific aspects of two or more passages. To put it simply, the assumption that multiple-choice tests are high on objective reliability but short on validity may be as untenable as the proposition that subjective, holistic marking is as conspicuous for its validity as it is for its unreliability.

Like the other assumptions I have rather bleakly surveyed, these will not hold either. Like all other examinations, examinations of English are susceptible and deserving of close analysis; their defensibility and indefensibility are by no means beyond comprehension. The determinants of what is and what is not defensible in English examinations are not necessarily as small as those particles to which I alluded in my text from *Tristram Shandy*. In fact, they are writ large in the syllabus of our subject. If students can discern in an English syllabus what they should read and why, surely it is not impossible that examiners could do the same and identify what might defensibly be assessed and how to assess it.

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Appendix

To provide a context for the above discussion this appendix contains extracts from the Western Australian Tertiary Admissions Examination paper of 1978.

(a) From *Paper I, Part 1: Comprehension and Comment.* (30% of total marks, suggested time: one hour). (In Part 2, students write essays on two topics (15% each) selected from a list of fourteen.)

In this section you are presented with four passages which deal with different aspects of love. Read all four passages and answer the questions which follow.

Passage 1: extract from Webster, E. "Passionate Love" in Krebs, D. ed.) *Readings in Social Psychology.*

Passage 2: Keats, J.: letter to Fanny Browne (1819).

Passage 3: extract from Miller, A. *A View from the Bridge.*

Passage 4: extract from Thurber, J. and White, E. B., *Is Sex Necessary?*

Questions:

1. Compare any TWO of the passages, paying particular attention to the differences of content, purpose, style and prospective audience. (15 marks)

2. Using the attitudes towards love that are brought out in any or all of these passages as a starting point, develop your own views on the topic of love. (15 marks)

(b) From *Paper II, Section 3.* (Paper II required the student to answer 40 questions in 45 minutes, and carried 40% of the total marks, one mark being allocated to each correct answer. Section 3 contains questions 25-40.)

This section consists of the transcript of the proceedings in a Court of the city of Leningrad. (The lines have been numbered on the left).

First hearing of the case against Josef Brodsky on February 18th, 1964. Presiding Judge: Mrs. Savelya.

Judge: What is your occupation?
Brodsky: I write poems. I translate. I suppose . . .
Judge: Never mind what 'you suppose'. Stand properly. Don't lean against the wall. Look at the Court. Answe. the Court properly.
Have you a regular job?

Brodsky: I thought that was a regular job.
Judge: Give a clear answer.
Brodsky: I wrote poems. I thought they would be printed. I suppose . . .
Judge: We're not interested in what you 'suppose'. Answer why you didn't work.
Brodsky: I did work. I wrote poems.
Judge: That doesn't interest us. We're interested in what institution you were in touch with.
Brodsky: I had contracts with a publishing house.
Judge: Then answer. Did you have enough contracts to live on? Give us a list of them with the dates and the sums they were for.
Brodsky: I can't remember exactly. All the contracts are with my lawyer.
Judge: I'm asking you.
Brodsky: Two books containing my translations have been published in Moscow (enumerates them).
Judge: How long have you been working?
Brodsky: Roughly . . .
Judge: We're not interested in 'roughly'.
Brodsky: Five years.
Judge: Where did you work?
Brodsky: In a factory, on geological expeditions . . .
Judge: How long did you work in the factory?
Brodsky: One year.
Judge: What as?
Brodsky: As a milling-machinist.
Judge: And what is your real trade?
Brodsky: I'm a poet. And a translator of poetry.
Judge: Who has recognised you as a poet? Who has given you a place among the poets?
Brodsky: No one. And who gave me a place among the human race?
Judge: Did you learn that?
Brodsky: What?
Judge: To be a poet. You didn't attempt to go to a university where people are trained . . . where they're taught . . . ?
Brodsky: I didn't think . . . I didn't think that could be done by training.
Judge: What by, then?
Brodsky: I thought that . . . by God.
Judge: Have you a request to make of the Court?
Brodsky: I should like to know why I've been arrested.
Judge: That is a question, not a request.
Brodsky: Then I have no request to make.

25. Which of the following would most probably be used to substantiate a charge against Brodsky? The information that Brodsky
    1. has contracts with a publishing house.
    2. does not have a regular job.
    3. writes poetry.
    4. is constantly being sacked from his job.
26. Brodsky's answer to the judge's first question is left hanging after "I suppose . . .". This method of reporting his speech indicates to the reader that Brodsky
    1. deliberately misinterprets the question.

2. wants his answer to be rejected.
3. has not taken the question seriously.
4. really does not know what he is.

27. In lines 3-5, the series of instructions given by the judge indicates that she
    1. has little sympathy for Brodsky's plight.
    2. hopes that Brodsky will display some humility in the court.
    3. is irritated by Brodsky's apparently indifferent attitude.
    4. understands that men like Brodsky need to be disciplined.

28. The word "work" is used differently in lines 9-10 when the judge demands "Answer why you didn't work" and line 21 when she asks "How long have you been working?" Which of the following pairs best describes the two meanings?

	Lines 9-19	*Line 21*
1.	Functioning in some physical manner.	— Menial tasks performed by unskilled labourers.
2.	Permanent occupational status.	— Occupations whereby income is earned.
3.	Employment as an indicator of social identity.	— Occasional employment which lacks social status.
4.	The profession one desires to pursue.	— The jobs one must accept to survive.

29. Read the interchange between the Judge and Brodsky in lines 21-34. Which one of the following best indicates the point of misunderstanding occurring in these lines?
    1. Brodsky makes a distinction between the way he earns a living and his vocation but the Judge does not recognise the distinction.
    2. Brodsky considers factory work as being of the same type as that involved in translating or writing poetry but the Judge does not.
    3. Brodsky argues that his work as a translator is of significance whereas the Judge refuses to accept that translating is work.
    4. Brodsky indicates that the time for which he worked is of more importance than what he did whereas the Judge's emphasis is on what Brodsky has done.

30. The exchange between the Judge and Brodsky in lines 33-35 hangs upon the notion that
    1. a person's identity is ascribed by society, and does not come from his knowledge of his self.
    2. there is a tension between one's personal image, and the image one has in society.
    3. one cannot claim to be anything unless that claim has been approved by social contract.
    4. a person may have a given social status, but that is not necessarily his true status.

31. When Brodsky says in response to the Judge's questioning, "I thought that . . . by God." (line 42) he is most probably
    1. protesting against the line of the Judge's questioning.
    2. denying the helplessness of his position.
    3. indicating refusal to answer the Judge's question.
    4. realising that the Judge does not understand him.

32. With which of the following is Brodsky most likely to agree?

1. Poetry does not depend on social acceptance; it comes from personal insight.
2. Poetry is not a craft learned from instruction; it is born of qualities natural in the poet.
3. Poetry is something which one can teach; it is not learned from divine inspiration.
4. Poetry does not require knowledge; it requires only a sense of religion.

33. The Judge's next question after Brodsky's assertion that poets are made by God indicates that she is
    1. convinced of Brodsky's guilt.
    2. exasperated by Brodsky's logic.
    3. uncertain about Brodsky's stupidity.
    4. impatient with Brodsky's obstinacy.

34. 'Brodsky's answers were often vague and so the Judge had to ask for further clarification.' This comment on the Court proceedings is inaccurate in that it ignores the way
    1. Brodsky is deliberately vague in order to evade the Judge's questions.
    2. Brodsky often clarifies his answers without waiting to be asked.
    3. the Judge attempts to confuse Brodsky in order to gain evidence against him so that he will incriminate himself.
    4. Brodsky's answers are often specific, but are not the ones the Judge wants.

35. Compare the kind of question the Judge asks in line 27, "How long did you work in the factory?" with that in lines 33-34, "Who has recognised you as a poet? Who has given you a place among the poets?" Compared with the first question the second is less
    1. insistent.
    2. hostile.
    3. matter-of-fact.
    4. amusing.

36. The Judge's reply to Brodsky's statement "I should like to know why I've been arrested" (line 44) most probably indicates that
    1. the Judge does not understand what Brodsky is asking.
    2. Brodsky's request has already been answered by the Judge's line of questioning.
    3. the Judge is uncertain of her ability to answer Brodsky's request.
    4. the Judge is certain that Brodsky has no right to ask such a question.

37. Having read this transcript of the proceedings of Brodsky's trial, with which of the following would you say he has been charged?
    1. Inciting civil disobedience.
    2. Having no visible means of support.
    3. Publishing obscene literature.
    4. Evading personal income tax.

38. Which of the following statements by the Judge most strongly suggests in the context of the proceedings that Brodsky's conviction is inevitable?
    1. Lines 12-13: "That doesn't interest us. We're interested in what institution you were in touch with."
    2. Line 36: "Did you learn that?"
    3. Lines 38-39: "To be a poet. You didn't attempt to go to a university, where people are trained . . . where they're taught . . .?"

4. Line 45: "That is a question, not a request".

39. How is the Judge's questioning used in the passage to suggest that the charge against Brodsky will be substantiated?
    1. With each question new evidence is introduced to build up a cumulative case against Brodsky.
    2. At critical points in the interrogation the questions change direction to reveal an unwillingness to consider Brodsky's defence.
    3. In successive questions, the inconsistency of Brodsky's answers is made clear.
    4. Different emphasis is given to important questions to reveal that the evidence against Brodsky has been fabricated.

40. What is Brodsky's attitude towards the proceedings?
    1. Genuine confusion.
    2. Cynical indifference.
    3. Deliberate insensibility.
    4. Willing co-operation.

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Motivational Effects of Different Schemes for Assessing Students' Writing

Brian Johnston
Department of Education, South Australia

Grading and marking are means for recording categorical judgements about the worth of a particular piece of work. But grades and marks are not only given to pieces of work. They are also given to students to label the worth of their endeavours over significant periods of time. And the formal appearance of a grade or a number encourages all, including the student, to see it as an indicator of a fixed characteristic of the student rather than as an aspect of the interaction between teacher, the student and the subject matter. Grades therefore become general evaluations of the worth of the student.

This process is illustrated in the following statements from two Western Australian students who were asked to write on "What Failure in English Means to Me" (Tomlinson, et al. (1980)).

> I think, perhaps, that to fail English is, in a way, to fail as a person of society. The reason for why I have interpreted failing English in this way is because English is concerned with how well you can explain things, the way you talk, how to interpret something, how well you understand, using your initiative, how much insight a person has, to show your ability at reading, writing and talking, to show how creative you can be and many other things that can tell what sort of person you are.
>
> (Year 12 student, government senior high school.)

> You ask how it feels to me to fail. Well up till now I've gotten quite used to it. I'm not quite sure why I fail but I do. It sort of grows on one — like a fungus.
>
> (Year 12 student, government senior high school.)

Often, grades are what are wanted when the teacher is required to *report* an evaluation of the student to people outside the classroom (principals, parents and employers), for these people's immediate interests are often well served by providing them with *labels* and categorisations of the student. But there are many reasons for suspecting that this labelling does not serve the best interests of the majority of students. And it is therefore somewhat at odds with the primary responsibility the teacher has to help students.

Concern at the effects of grading and marking is most commonly felt in relation to those students who usually get poor grades. Broadfoot (1979: p. 113) described how:

> The pupil constantly in receipt of negative evaluations which . . . the uni-dimensional value system of the school is likely to apply to his

behaviour as well as his academic achievement, learns, for his own protection, to "play it cool", to devalue these evaluations and develop an alternative value system in which he can experience success. These attempts to defend himself against the sense of failure meted out by the school will be enhanced to the extent that he can band together with other pupils in the same situation. Thus gradually, as teachers know only too well, recalcitrant cliques and infamous classes develop characterised by a rejection of the school's values, and frequently, the evaluation of alternative values such as peer group comradeship or machismo.

Teachers usually make herculean efforts to encourage and stimulate these students, but often no amount of understanding of charismatic teaching will succeed. The teacher becomes frustrated and often angry at what appears as a lack of motivation. But the student is usually far from unmotivated. He is strongly motivated to avoid a sense of being a failure; he is attempting to protect his own sense of self-worth. Paradoxically, he can best avoid a sense of being a failure, someone who is unable to achieve, if he makes little or no effort to achieve. Because then, when he gets a poor grade, he can explain it away by pointing to his lack of effort on a task that he can claim he doesn't value. Whereas, if he had made an effort and still does poorly, that would then be seen by himself and others as demonstrating a lack of ability to achieve.

These failure avoiding students can also protect themselves when they are forced to set goals, by setting them unrealistically high. The inevitable failure will not then be an indicator of their intrinsic ability.

What of the students who commonly get middling grades like a C? They often use the strategies just described, although less consistently. They also suffer from another disadvantage in that while the middling grades are the most commonly awarded, they are also the least informative. This was demonstrated in a study (Johnston, 1978) conducted in South Australia in 1974. Five classes of year ten English students were required to take essays that they had written and which had been graded by the teacher, and predict how the teacher would grade them according to seven separate criteria (grammar, interest level, planning etc.). The teachers were then required to make separate gradings for each criterion, and the accuracy of the students' predictions was assessed. The students who commonly received As and Bs were more than twice as accurate in their predictions as were those who received middling grades.

The crudeness of the traditional grading scheme also means that those students who usually get a C are often unlikely to see any change in their grade, after what might appear to them to be a significant improvement in their work. When these students find that variations in the quality of their work do not seem to affect their grade, the grade comes to be seen as an inevitable result, a function of their acceptable, but unremarkable place in a developing hierarchy. In this situation there is little point in making more than a minimal effort to achieve.

And what of the students who usually get "good" grades? Grading is often justified on the grounds that it motivates students, and research supports this claim for that proportion of students who generally receive high grades (Kirkland, 1971: p. 41). While some of these students are oriented to work effectively towards success and to accept the occasional lower grade as a stimulus to further endeavour, others, who are labelled

successful, are motivated primarily by fear of failure. Covington and Beery (1976) describe them as *overstrivers*, characterised by high ability, over-preparedness and excessive attention to detail. They have grown up with a sense that one's achievements define one's worth. Consequently, they work compulsively to avoid failure, and because of the amount of effort they expend, they are all the more easily threatened; for if they were to fail they could not attribute it to lack of effort. Consequently, these students regard failure at school with a dread that is far out of proportion to its actual significance. "Like all failure-avoiding students, the overstriver has fallen victim to a misunderstanding of the proper role of failure in the learning process". (Covington and Beery, 1976: p. 57.)

There is another cause for concern at the effect grading has on students, both successful and unsuccessful. By providing clear and powerful rewards for writing that are quite separate from the writing itself, students are distracted from appreciating the intrinsic satisfactions of writing. A body of research (Lepper & Greene, 1978) is accumulating to show that when a task can be enjoyable – the best performance is not achieved by following mechanical rules – then providing rewards for completing the task has detrimental effects on the learner's motivation to continue with that type of activity when the rewards are no longer offered. When the emphasis is on being rewarded for doing the task the learners' attention becomes geared to mechanical procedures and their enjoyment of it wanes: it becomes an onerous chore.

A further problem that arises with traditional grading schemes is that students who are used to receiving a judgemental response from the teacher will often become confused when the teacher tries to praise them in order to encourage them to work harder (Johnston, 1980). This use of praise is often directed to poorly performing students. These students are inclined to interpret the teacher's passing comment that their opening paragraph is good as a judgement – and then be outraged when they receive a poor or middling grade for the work. After several experiences like this the teacher's judgements soon become suspect, being seen by the students as more an indicator of the teacher's mood than of the quality of the student's work.

The Theory

Slowly we developed a theory which described characteristics of assessment schemes which might be more effective motivationally than the traditional, judgemental approach of grading or marking. The theory was important because we wanted to be confident that when we came to collect data from schools, we would be able to draw conclusions from it, and do more than simply report back. The theory can be conveniently described in terms of *five guidelines for teachers*, which some of the sub-committee considered to be valuable suggestions for developing a "responsive" assessment scheme.

1. Do not record a judgement of the worth of every piece of writing.

   While it is difficult to imagine a situation where teachers *never* gave an overall evaluation of the worth of a piece of work, it obviously need not happen with every piece of writing. If students are to be encouraged to write often, they should be able to write without there being a continual threat of evaluation. Deferring evaluation is a powerful stimulus to production of ideas (Osborn, 1957) and high quality student

writing comes from students whose focal concentration is on the ideas they are trying to express (Squire [1975] citing Sawkin). Many professional writers' accounts attest to the value of encouraging production while deferring evaluation. Virginia Woolf (1953) provides an example:

> Still if it were not written rather faster than the fastest type-writing, if I stopped and took thought, it would never be written at all; and the advantage of the method is that it sweeps up accidentally several stray matters which I should exclude if I hesitated, but which are the diamonds of the dust-heap.
>
> January 20 1919

2. Avoid recording reactions to a piece in terms of a formal record, a grade or number.

   These give a seeming objectivity to what is often, with writing, a largely subjective response by the teacher. The subjectivity does not render the reaction less accurate, impartial or fair. But because the reaction has a subjective component it therefore needs to be described all the more carefully, if it is to be clearly understood by the student. Another problem with seemingly formal records is that they imply to many people that a relatively fixed characteristic is being assessed, and they can be the basis for self-fulfilling prophesies which can limit students' development.

3. Be specific in describing the aspects of a piece of writing that are being responded to.

   Clearly it is difficult for a student to improve his writing if he is unaware of particular aspects of his writing that he might change. At any one time, teacher and student should share an understanding of at least one specific aspect of writing that the particular student is to consider working on. Without this, exhortations to improve would seem doomed to failure.

   Furthermore, if the student knows which aspects of his writing are being responded to, he is less likely to take the reaction as a reflection of his general worth.

4. Encourage student involvement in arriving at assessments by:
   - Teaching students self-assessment skills.
   - Teaching students peer-group assessment skills.
   - Teaching students to specify the aspects of their work that they want responded to.
   - Teaching students to negotiate assessments.

   Giving students practice at assessing pieces of writing is a valuable part of providing information and models to help them write well; and after all, when the students leave school there will not be a teacher to do the assessing. Furthermore, student involvement in the process also makes clearer the joint responsibility that teacher and student share both for the quality of the learning and for the written products. Encouraging students to behave responsibly in this way is also a powerful means of expressing to them that their views about their own work are important.

   Finally, the ability to make accurate assessments of ourselves, our

products and our future goals is a basic characteristic of a psychologically healthy person.

Teachers have a responsibility to foster students' ability to make accurate self-assessments, if for no reason other than to balance out the alienating effects of the labelling they are forced to do at report writing time.

5. Encourage students to revise work after it has been commented upon.

When this approach is used, a piece of writing is being treated as something that develops, rather than as a static entity. We suggest that students will be less likely to see grades (for example) as labelling fixed characteristics of them, if they see how through re-drafting writing can become a cooperative exercise. This approach makes it clear that a grade is a description of an interaction between teacher and student, and not a comment on the student in isolation.

The Research

The purpose of our research was then to see if assessment schemes which follow the five guidelines are associated with students being more encouraged to improve their writing. The first question we had to address was, whether we could develop a reliable method of measuring teachers' assessment schemes that covered those elements seen to be important in our theory.

We investigated this by surveying the English teachers in every secondary school (state and private) in South Australia. One thousand and six teachers completed a structured questionnaire which required them to describe the degree to which their assessing followed our five guidelines. Analysis of the teachers' responses showed that a single reliable scale for measuring assessment schemes could be taken from the questionnaire, if the specificity of the teacher's assessment (guideline 3) was ignored. Teacher specificity was not positively correlated with the other aspects of a responsive scheme. Our tentative conclusion was that the specificity of the teachers' assessments is independent of the degree to which the teacher employs a responsive rather than judgemental approach.

This article reports work done using the scale which reliably differentiates between judgemental and responsive assessment schemes. We are at the moment continuing our investigation of the nature and effects of specificity in assessment practice.

Our next task was to approach a smaller number of teachers whose assessment practices covered the range from judgemental to responsive, and to collect data from their students concerning their motivation to improve their writing. The individual teachers' questionnaires identified the school they came from, but not the particular teacher concerned. We approached a sample of schools whose questionnaires reported a range of varied assessment practices, explained our reasons for selecting that school, and asked for two volunteer teachers who exemplified the practice that we had identified from that school's questionnaires. We collected data from thirty-four teachers; again both state and private schools were involved, both metropolitan and country.

In order to check that we had accurate knowledge of these teachers' assessment practices we got them to complete the questionnaire again, while explaining to us the reasons for their responses. A further check was made when we gave the students taught by these teachers a questionnaire

to assess their response to the assessment scheme they operated under. Some questions concerned the degree to which the students were involved in the assessment process, and these provided a strong confirmation of the descriptions provided by the teachers.

We were then ready to investigate the question of central concern: Do students who work under a responsive assessment scheme report being motivated to improve their written work as a result of the assessment more often than students working under a judgemental scheme? In our questionnaire to students we included items which were indicators of the students' motivation to improve after assessment. They covered such questions as "Do you practise improving your work by doing some parts of an assignment again after it has been assessed?", "Do you try to improve your work the next time, in the way the teacher has indicated?", "If the teacher spends a lot of time writing comments about your work, does this encourage you to work harder?", and "Do you feel like giving up because you get the same assessment time after time?", and formed a reliable nine item scale.

The students' motivation scores were averaged for each class, and the class average was then correlated with the score indicating the responsiveness of the teacher's assessment scheme. The Pearson correlation obtained was .52 giving strong support to our theory that a responsive scheme is more effective motivationally than a judgemental scheme.

We were aware that this finding might have been caused by other factors. For example, the teachers who used a responsive assessment scheme might have been more popular with their students and this may explain why their students reported being motivated more by assessments. We examined this possibility after getting the classes involved to indicate how much they liked their teacher, and found that there was no significant difference in popularity between the responsive and the judgemental teachers. Therefore the students' liking for the teacher played no role in causing our main finding. In addition, further analysis suggested that it did not come about because of different levels of achievement (as assessed by teacher's gradings) of the different classes.

While the more responsive approaches to assessment seemed clearly superior, in terms of their motivational effects, when the average scores for each class were considered, it was of interest to consider whether this superiority applied when only the students who were getting A grades were considered; for these successful students are rewarded under the judgemental scheme. Perhaps a judgemental scheme might be most appropriate for these successful students, and a responsive scheme more suitable for other students. An analysis involving only A students was possible because all but three teachers were required to provide such ratings for the school assessment periods. This showed that the A students' motivation scores were marginally higher under the more responsive approaches, but this was not a significant effect. *It seems therefore that when there is less emphasis on a judgemental approach to assessment, A students do not suffer a disadvantage and the less successful students are more motivated to improve.*

The student questionnaire provided us with the opportunity to investigate three other questions concerning student response to assessment schemes. We asked the students to indicate the reasons they thought the teacher had for assessing them, by choosing from a list provided in the questionnaire. We thought students involved in a responsive approach might more often

indicate that it was to help them improve, whereas the students under the judgemental system might more often see its purpose to be to check on the amount they work, to allow the teacher to see how each student compares with the rest of the class or merely to satisfy a requirement of teaching as a job. However, there was no relationship between responsiveness and the reasons chosen by the students. Most attributed a helping, educational intention to their teachers, and this was true under each assessment approach.

We also examined the degree to which the students saw their assessment schemes to be fair. Four items from the questionnaire formed a reliable scale to indicate this aspect of the student response. We suspected that students under the judgemental scheme might be more satisfied that they were treated fairly than the students under the responsive schemes, for the concept of fairness, which is of the essence in a judgemental approach, is given less importance in a responsive approach. For example, in a judgemental scheme, the teacher does not allow a student to revise a piece of work after it has been graded and then have it regraded, because this would be "unfair". In contrast, the responsive teacher would see the educational value of a revision to be the most important consideration.

However, our suspicion was contradicted. The Pearson correlation co-efficient between responsiveness and fairness was .33, indicating a statistically significant, although small, relationship such that the responsive schemes were described as fairer than were the judgemental schemes.

Another interesting question was whether the students in the judgemental approach were more inclined to interpret their assessments in a competitive way. (Have I beaten my friends, or have they beaten me?). This was assessed in questions like these:

> When your work is returned are you more interested in finding out how your work is compared with others in the class, or would you rather know what the teacher thought was good and what could be improved? You receive a better assessment than previously – does this mean that your work is better than that which you usually produce, or that you are closer to the top of the class?

There was in fact a negative correlation between responsiveness and a competitive orientation amongst the students (the Pearson co-efficient was .51). Students working under a judgemental scheme reported a competitive approach more frequently, whereas those in the more responsive approaches were more concerned with comparing assessment information with what they had received previously.

Further analysis confirmed that these latter two findings concerning fairness and competitiveness could not be explained in terms of teacher popularity or student achievement (assessed, as before, in terms of teacher grades).

In conclusion, our research has to this stage been satisfying in that it has provided a coherent picture of some of the effects of different assessment schemes. We are at the moment continuing our study, by looking more closely at whether the specificity of the teacher's reaction is important motivationally.

In addition, we have not yet given attention to the more important criterion by which an assessment scheme might be judged, which is the development in the students' work. On the basis of the findings presented here, we would expect students under the responsive schemes to write

more often and develop more in their written expression. To see whether this is so is the next step in our research.

We have also begun preparing case-study evaluations of responsive assessment schemes. Responsive assessment is not a euphemism for unsupervised learning and we know that it is difficult to set up a new assessment approach, particularly if school policy gives a higher priority to the labelling function than it does to the educational function of assessment.

The case-studies will make it easier for teachers (who like most of us have a long experience of predominantly judgemental assessment) to understand more precisely how responsive evaluation may be set up. Some may then wish to experiment with changes to their own assessment practice.

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Note

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On Language Learning

James Moffett
California, USA.

In the San Francisco Bay area, an interesting thing happened a few years ago that relates to what I am going to speak about. California, like many states, publishes the reading scores of districts, and everybody plays the numbers game – who is doing the job and who is not. San Francisco was embarrassed, because it was the bottom of the heap in the state of California. It is not all that poor, and there are school districts much worse off that came out much better on reading scores. You know how it is in the United States – we stand or fall by our reading scores. Schooling is reading scores.

A couple of reporters from the *San Francisco Chronicle* decided they would go into schools in the worst district in the state for reading scores and find the one at the top and the one at the bottom and ask them what they were doing or not doing. They took the reading scores and identified the one with the highest and the lowest in the San Francisco district. In the school with the lowest reading scores, the principal said: "Well, I got stuck with some materials from the principal last year that take the children through reading skills in steps – one little particle after another". He was very irate about it, having got stuck with these materials in this very mechanistic approach to reading. They went to the other school and it looked like what we call an open classroom. As you go in, different students are doing different things at the same time – and different working parties. They had the highest reading scores in the city.

I think this is very interesting, very revealing. They were reversing the trend of the rest of the school district. They had a lot going on – the children were busy, very active. It was really individualised – not just in the sense that they were all going through the same mini-stepped program, at different rates of speed. It was really individualised. Different children were doing different things and putting together different programs for themselves – a real open classroom.

The Dichotomy

I think this is a good parable. It epitomises a conflict or dichotomy that is occurring in the country right now. I hope we heal the split in a few years. I will try to describe this split in several ways. It is a split between two fairly opposed approaches. I am not creating the dichotomy, I am trying to describe it. I think it is there already.

Jeanne Dixon, the prophetess, has prophesied that the US is going to have a civil war in the 1980s – she means a physical civil war. Let's hope she is wrong. But I think she is reading trends like this where forces are on a collision course. Those two schools are really very different. They are

operating on different educational philosophies, dictating different educational practices. This makes a lot of difference for the students and for the staff while living in those schools. Aside from reading, the two schools feel different to be in.

Back to Basics

One half of this conflict is the back-to-basics movement. I do not know when we have ever been anywhere else. Not in my lifetime have we ever been anywhere but back to basics. "Back" implies to me we have to return to something we left. I do not think we have left this particular place. As a child growing up, I never had any other kind of schooling. I do not think we have been anywhere we can turn "back" to.

A second thing that comes to my mind in thinking about the whole back-to-basics movement is that people who are talking about the basic skills are not just talking about the two Rs goals – basic reading and writing (literacy). Do you know anyone in education who seriously opposes the two Rs? Do you know anybody who seriously opposes accountability in some form? I do not know anyone who opposes literacy. For anyone to say, "We're for back-to-basics", creates a lot of unnecessary division. What people mean when they argue for back-to-basics is a certain way of teaching, a certain *method.* That is different. We may not disagree about the goal of teaching literacy, but there is going to be a lot of disagreement about methods, how to do it, means. The slogan confuses means with ends.

The back-to-basics slogan does mean a certain *way* of teaching. The method is what I would call the particle approach – by breaking learning down into very small pieces, and then trying to order them in some kind of sequence.

The Basic Basics

I think there are some basics more basic than others. I am as much for the two Rs as anyone, but how basic are you going to get? It depends on your framework. I say the real basics are thinking and speaking. If you take the larger perspective of language learning, which I assume is what we are about, we are after the total language development of students. The basic skills in the sense of the two Rs – literacy – are very important, but only to literacy. They are not basic to the whole of language development. Underlying the "basic skills" themselves are the more basic basics – thinking and speaking. Those involve the totality of experience – non-verbal and verbal – and the social experiences of the learner. Whether we need literacy in the future, we do not have to worry about now. If we work on thinking and speaking, literacy can be added on very easily. The real difficulty I think, that schools have had has been with thinking and speaking. Because of that, the literacy skills have not done very well. It is for that reason that we are in trouble. I think the best way to teach the basic skills is not to isolate them and over-focus on them, but to teach them within the context of the real basics – thinking and speaking.

The novelist Balzac is supposed to have written his novels by dictating them aloud to a male secretary. One person composing, another transcribing – two utterly different activities as dramatised by the fact that they can be done by two different people. When somebody is writing, they are doing both at once. If you are writing something you are both author and secretary, and you are doing two totally different activities that are completely

separable. You can compose without writing, and you can write without composing. If you take dictation, you are writing in one sense. In a literacy sense, you are transcribing speech – that is what the secretary does. The point is that when we talk about writing, it is in two different senses at once. A lot of the confusion about basics – whether they are basic skills or other kinds of basics – has to do with the confusion of the two different meanings of writing.

Parallel to that are two different meanings of reading that get confused. You can have two different people doing the two actions that go together when we read. There are people, for example, who go and read to the sick or to the blind. You have one person actually sounding out the text. You have another person who cannot see the text, and he is doing the comprehending. You can imagine that the person sounding out the text does not understand it, but the other does. A friend of mine, a reading specialist, was trying to make this point as we were talking over the reading problems. He said, "I can read Hebrew in the one sense but not in the other. I can read out the text, and somebody else can understand it, but I can't." These are two completely separable activities, but the fact that they both go on simultaneously, in any authentic act of reading, creates great confusion. It makes the term "reading" itself very ambiguous. You say you are teaching reading. Which do you mean? (This is not some kind of word play; it has very direct consequences for how one teaches and how one aligns oneself in this quarrel going on now between the two camps and the quarrel that's been going on for years).

One sense of reading corresponds to the secretaryship, the transcription and writing, which we sometimes call the decoding or word attack aspect, the sounding out. Whether one does this out loud or inaudibly, there is that translation from print. The other thing that goes on at the same time in a normal act of reading is that the person is also making sense of the words.

It is true that a very proficient reader may eventually do away with the middleman – voice. This apparently happens with effective speed readers who have good comprehension and also read fast. They seem to get a more direct connection between the text and thought, to bypass the vocalisation. If you talk about teaching reading to people who are not yet proficient readers, however, then you have that voice as the intermediary, either the voice out loud or hidden sub-vocalisation. In reading and writing there are at least two activities going on at once, and the two Rs refer to the surface activities – transcribing and sounding out, what I call the top level, the final overlay. The real basics are down underneath there – the comprehension of concepts, the acquisition of an oral vocabulary to which to attach the written words. All the laws of communication, the understanding of sentence structure, basically acquired before school – all this is acquired orally. This makes a lot of difference in how you think about the basic skills.

Motivation

If it is true, as I have claimed, that at least 85 per cent of reading and writing is the oral part, then it means that the biggest part of teaching and writing can be *done by oral methods.* If writing is just transcribing your own voice, being secretary to yourself, it in itself is a superficial act. *The main thing is thinking the thought,* thinking out what you are going to say. That is very difficult. But writing down your own speech is not in itself that

difficult – if you have a reason to do it. That is Catch-22!! Motivation and will – to write down your speech when you can already say what you have to say. In other words, you are involved in *acquiring a second medium, a shift from an oral-aural medium to a visual-graphic medium.* There has to be a reason. If you already have the first one, why bother with the second one? If you can give information, ideas, stories, etc., orally to people, why bother with the second? I think *there are compelling reasons why one should bother with the second*, but they are not always apparent to a five- or six-year-old. They become apparent to many kids only when it's too late, and they have already dropped out or are in such a self-defeating situation in school that they are too negative to overcome it. One of the problems is finding their will and motivation soon enough to learn to read and write. My own feeling is that literacy is very easy. I know this sounds very cavalier due to the fact that school systems are foundering on the problem of "basic skills." There is so much hysteria about it – crash programs, "Right to Read", and special funding pumped in, and the reading scores are held up – they are paramount. The illiteracy rate is rising – up from elementary into secondary. California, for example, has required that all secondary school teachers of any subject – Maths, Art – take a reading methods course. Illiteracy is rising; it is going up into the college. It is not all bad teaching. Some of it is that we are more democratic. We are trying to educate more people than we used to. If the scores drop because we are trying to do justice to more people, let the scores drop – if that is part of the meaning of it.

The "Lap Method"

Part of the meaning of the rise in illiteracy, though, is that we are in an era where we have more children coming to school who were not read to as children. Some tell-tale effects are coming out because of it. It used to be that the only children who had trouble in school were those whose parents were uneducated or did not read books and who could not read or did not read to their children at bedtime. That was already significant and we should have paid attention. I think it meant that those children who were getting a booster at home may have been half taught to read at home. Today it turns out that many children with well-to-do and educated parents are not getting read to because they have television as a bedtime story or have only one parent.

This may seem trivial to you at first, but I think it is important. This is not a tirade against television; it has its place. In this particular case, it has replaced the bedtime story. Many children were in effect learning to read, or at least half learning to read, by what I would call "the lap method" – one thing that has never (maybe now is beginning to be included in reading research) been dignified as a reading method, although it may well have been the way a large percentage of children in the U.S. used to learn to read or received a huge booster. *In other words, it looked as if they were learning to read more in school than they actually were.* Now we are facing the acid test. Not only are we trying to get more children all the way through school into college, but we also now have the majority of middle-class children coming through without this home booster. I think we are getting a more accurate picture about what has been true for sometime.

You can see my point in connection with basic skills. I think for some time now the emphasis has been on basic skills in the sense of a particular

kind of method and it really has not been working very well. We are now beginning to find that out. National and international assessments of education both came out with some similar conclusions – that *home correlates more with reading achievement than anything done in school.* It makes more difference what is going on in the home – your socio-economic groups, etc. – than what is going on in school – the method, the teacher, all the variables of the school situation. None of the latter count as much as the home in reading achievement. This fits in with the way I am interpreting trends, I believe. Far from working well, as we were misled to think, conventional drills-and-rules schooling has been tried and proven untrue.

The Particle Approach

I have been trying to put together a number of things like this in my own mind when I talk to people in schools. I find that many teachers are not doing what they believe in. They believe in many things, but they are *doing many things they do not believe in. Many teachers are teaching mechanistically* – in what I would call the particle approach – the bits and pieces. I think they feel forced to teach this way, or else they are not sure which way to go. There is much talk about many programs and materials – mini-steps – what I call the *"itsy-bitsy" steps* – and there is so much *"riding the herd" on basic skills in the sense of this particle method.* I will explain a little more what I mean about that.

What I call the particle approach chops up reading. It would be introducing one phoneme spelling at a time in a very definite sequence that all children go through, whether they need it or not. Many children would not need the sequence at all and many would not need all the sequence, or many might benefit from some other way. It is *breaking down reading skills into an infinity of small skills and then programming them in one sequence for all.* In spelling, it has to do with running all children through a spelling program that takes up each possible spelling error, one after the other. All children are introduced to all possible spelling errors. If you think about it, this is incredibly inefficient. To look at things efficiently, take one individual and say, "What's happening with him?". Do a case study. He is going through all possible spelling errors when there are only certain ones he has trouble with. The main thing is for him to know which ones (self-diagnosis) and focus on those.

Probably one of the best ways to teach spelling is through massive reading experiences, plus massive writing experience – the constant effort to write down words, to do the secretary part for one's own speech. If a child is turned loose to write constantly, his spelling regularises – as it does if he is also doing a lot of reading. Most adults *who are not sure how to spell a word write it out* and look at it. *There is something about visual memory.*

Phonics

Kenneth Goodman says that *over-fixating children on a fine focus in the early years creates many reading problems.* He does have a point. There are many children in the U.S. who have checked out on all the programmed materials, but they cannot read. *If all the particles added up to a whole* – if this were logically true – *they should be able to read.* But they have too many pieces and they have not been able to put them together. They check out (the scores are there) on the programmed

materials, but they cannot read. Although they can sound out syllable by syllable or maybe word by word, they never get the phrases, the sentences, the swing, the continuity and the meaning – so they do not read. They have been taught in one, shallow sense, but not in the other.

Composition

In composition, the particle approach works like this. What is composition? It is putting words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, and paragraphs into some complete discourses – a piece of communication. Let us take the particles one at a time – what I call de-composition. Let us teach the words, teach the sentences, teach the paragraphs, and some day students will put this altogether. Unfortunately they are usually out of school by then. They don't ever quite get it all together. By this approach you teach vocabulary separately, by vocabulary lists mainly; spelling separately, by spelling lists or spelling programs similar to what I have just described; sentence structure, by dummy runs – analysing dummy sentences and doctoring sentences; and so on, with paragraphs. Of course, *the larger the unit, the more meaning there is to it – the larger the possibility of there being meaning, and therefore motivation and purpose.* About the only thing that really has meaning and motivation and purpose is *a whole discourse*; that is, *some communication complete for its purpose.* This could be a label, an ad, a poem, a short story, an essay, a piece of reportage; it could even be a one-sentence thing like a label, a single word, if that is complete for communication purposes. One word on a bottle – "poison" – can be a complete discourse as far as I am concerned. That is not a particle. A proverb too is a whole sentence – a complete literary form.

Isolating Basic Skills

If it is not the complete discourse, you are into problems. The smaller the learning unit, the greater are your problems. For the smaller it is, the more apt it is to look like what is called a basic skill. *When you isolate out something, you make it harder to teach.* There is a *self-defeating self-contradiction involved in saying, "Basic skills aren't being taught – let's isolate them out even more than we have before".* We will write specific objectives and make sure these get done. We will write a specific objective for every spelling of the forty phonemes in English. (I am not making this up. There are school districts doing this. California and Michigan got into this business early – they were pressured to go to a systems approach. It is going on nationally). This pushes for too much specificity. *It pushes for specifying particles too small to be real learning units.*

If you mince something up that is as difficult as writing and reading (in both senses – the thinking and speaking bases), you have totally unreal, unscientific learning units. Nobody knows how to cut composition up as fine as some of the specific objectives are supposed to be. I do not think an educational researcher or a learning psychologist would put his name or stake his reputation on units as small as the way reading and writing are sometimes chopped up. Then what order are you going to put them in? If the units are unreal in the first place, the sequence is going to be unreal – what I call "unreality squared", a sort of a science fiction. *This is not to say that the small things are not taught. My argument is for teaching the parts within the whole.* Part of the *false conflict* today is saying *either we teach*

the wholes or the parts. That is ridiculous! We do not have to be in that either-or situation. *We have to teach both*. The real conflict is between a holistic, humanistic, creative education and a very mechanistic, systems approach – the particle approach which is identified with the basic skills as a method, not the two R's.

Learning To Talk

I feel teachers are caught in the cross-fire between the holistic approach and the particle approach. Which is right? I have a couple of arguments. One is that we all learned to talk by the holistic approach. I doubt if we ever would have learned to talk if it had been broken down and programmed in one sequence for all. If there were a sequence, it would not have been true for all of us. We should look at the holistic model for learning by which we all accomplished this. Learning to talk is really an extraordinary feat. Consider that human beings start doing it in the first or second year of life. They do not even know what it is they are learning – the nervous system is not even fully developed; they do not have any professional teachers or special learning site; they do not have crash programs and the "Right to Speak"; they do not have federal funding. And yet there are no drop-outs, no failures, no underachievers (unless the child is defective neurologically). This is something I urge you to think about. Do not take my argument, but think it through for yourself. There are a lot of implications. If learning to talk is in fact much harder than learning to read and write (in the sense of literacy), then why do schools have so much trouble in delivering the "basic skills"? Why the hysteria today?

Advantages of Home

The home has a lot of advantages. First of all, we learn to speak *first*. There is stunning motivation to learn to talk. You join the human race, with all its perquisites and fringe benefits. The child seldom, if ever in its life, is so motivated to do something. Home has a small, generally supportive, warm environment. Parents and children may fight a lot, but still there is a lot of support for learning to talk. It is completely individualised – not in the shallow sense of going through hoops at different rates of speed, but in the sense that every child has an utterly different learning program. It is very interactive. You have observed, I am sure, the parent-child interchanges that go on. Linguists write a grammar for the eighteen-month-old, the twenty-four-month-old, the three-year-old, and they can trace the evolution of children's language. That is the really hard part – children learning first of all what the repertory of meaning is to which the words are attached. In the panorama of existence the child is born into, he is beginning to cut reality up into objects and things, concepts. Some are visible and some invisible. Out of all the sounds they hear around them, infants have to begin to single out human speech sounds – "auditory discrimination", one of the big phrases in reading. It is important, but so much of it – most of it – has gone on before school, just in discriminating human sounds from all other sounds.

Within the human speech sounds, the learner has to discriminate those sounds that go with certain objects or things and then match the speech sounds with the objects. Then these words are put together according to certain rules (this is the grammar part, the sentence construction). They are beginning to understand the difference in parts of speech, syntactic

rules, and nobody ever teaches them these things. It is impressive! We know they are not just imitating because they make up sentences they have never heard before and they comprehend sentences they have never heard before. In other words, it is creative, it is generative. *We know they must have inferred a grammatical model* – and all of this is pre-school. How come they can do all that, and they have trouble reading and writing? In transcribing their own voice or taking somebody else's voice off the page?

Institutional Problems

Today I think there is a lot less motive for literacy. The major problem for the school is to help children summon for literacy the same will and energy that they had for speaking. It is hard for an institution to be all those things – warm, supportive, etc. I say this in sympathy with the institutions. It is not just schools that have this problem. Look at government, industry, private foundations – they all have institutional problems of handling large numbers. They are not solving those problems any better than the schools are. If learning is very personal, and language learning particularly so – it was with speaking, and so it is with reading and with writing – how do you accommodate it with twenty-five or thirty or forty children in a class? It is a problem of numbers, but with that goes the institutional problems of standardisation, conformity, compartmentalisation, and the kind of mechanistic, mini-stepped programming that at the moment seems to be winning.

We can understand why institutions, those running institutions, and those legislating for institutions push us this way. It is hard to manage these numbers. I think there are answers to how to give in school the same kind of positive learning conditions obtained in the home that account for the success in learning to talk. Learning to read and write is, in fact, pretty easy if you can duplicate these conditions. What I have been working on, along with a lot of other teachers, are very practical ways to try to reverse the situation, to be able to regard numbers not as a curse, but as a blessing; to exploit numbers instead of being done in by them.

Exploiting Numbers

There are many good teaching ideas that have not worked because the classroom management was still based on all children doing the same thing at the same time. All programming did was have children move like race-horses all going on the same course, with some ahead of others. These ideas pre-empted the term "individualisation", they muddied the waters at a time when we needed very much to successfully think through this problem of individualising. I think individualisation means pretty much what it did in the home. You might say that is Cloud Nine, who can do that? But there is a precedent for it in the US. It was done. You talk about radical and reactionery. It seems very radical now to have children teaching children or to have multi-gradedness or individualisation, but they all occurred in the one-room schoolhouse. It is a very old American tradition. In a sense, in advocating these things, we are reactionary, not radical. We are going back to a former time. My father-in-law taught in one of these schoolhouses in West Virginia. There was no other way to run a classroom, except to have children teach children, except to individualise. Every child had a different program, because there were only

a couple in each grade. It was multi-graded. So what's new? That had a lot going for it. I am not saying they got fantastic results, because there were other problems in those days. They had a lot less knowledge, fewer materials, and so on. With the people resources, the human resources, they were doing all right; they needed other resources too. I am sure my father-in-law's school was far too cut off from the rest of the world, but he couldn't overcome that problem all by himself. We do not have that problem now.

To get to the positive part of it, what the school has over the home is a lot more resources. This is where numbers should be exploited as an advantage. The child's language development really requires getting out of the house at a certain point, because the family understands the child too well. Put him among some people who do not understand him quite so well and he has to be more explicit about what he says and writes. He can get feedback from people who do not go more than half-way to understand him, who want to know what he has to say; people who have different ideas from those he got in the home who can enlarge his repertory of concepts, of vocabulary, of sentence structure, of dialect maybe, and of points of view. This has tremendous payoff for reading and writing. Eighty-five per cent of literacy is concept formation, and vocabulary, all orally learned. Some of this can be learned nowadays through television – although obviously it depends on which programs are being watched – you do not have to get these through books. In fact, in the beginning an undeveloped reader or writer is probably getting most of this literacy through other media, but it pays off for reading. Once he is a proficient reader, he may get still more vocabulary and concepts through books.

We should group heterogeneously within the whole classroom. We can have infinite sub-grouping so that a child gets the benefit of every different type of person. They can pool spelling; they can read together; they can dope out something together they could not do alone; they can write together until they are ready to write alone; they can proof read together; they can talk together and find out when they are making sense and when they are not. They can do this for each other; it does not take an old pro to tell somebody they do not understand him or to ask him a question to make him elaborate. So much of growth is elaborating, becoming more and more explicit, and understanding the need for explicitness and the need for elaboration. This comes about through interaction. It can be improvisation or small group discussion or task talk if children do various physical tasks together. A lot of incidental talk that goes on is very good. It helps build up this oral base to the point where literacy really takes, where children really do read and do not just dope out spellings or phonemes. At this stage they take books out of the library. They read when they are not lashed into it and they write when they are not flogged.

There are many advantages to numbers. For example, a teacher cannot process all the writing children need to do if they are to write well. I do not care how conscientious, facile, brilliant you are, you cannot do it. All you can do is get guiltier and guiltier because you are not giving children as much writing as you really ought to give them. I do not think you should go on being guilty and copping out completely and having children analyse dummy sentences – fiddling with particles – and calling that composition.

Another thing I got out of the *San Francisco Chronicle* is a recent story about "bonehead English" at the University of California at Berkley. It

used to be that this course was just for a few monolithic athletes. Very few students in the freshman class used to do this English course, but now the majority of the entering class (recently well over half) do. This created a scandal. The *Chronicle* interviewed the students to find out what they felt about it. Many of them said, "Well, I was never asked to write in high school". One girl said, "They gave you these tests and you knew what you were supposed to say or do. It was called composition, but we never actually did very much writing". You learn to write by writing, not be fiddling with the parts and hoping someday they will cohere into a whole.

Model of Growth

Let me give you a model of growth. I think we have used for a long time a metaphor or model of language learning, language growth, that probably came from an antiquated, 19th century billiard-ball type of physics, the old Newtonian physics with the particles colliding. This had to be abandoned when physicists got into relativity and they had to add other dimensions, and neutrinos, etc. Taking the old assembly-line notion, you take the pieces and you make sub-assemblies. Then the sub-assemblies are further assembled; then off plops the new product at the end of the line. In that sense, the parts add up to the whole – it works with inorganic matter. Now you may feel sometimes that you are working with inorganic matter; the student is utterly inert. However, you are dealing with a biological person; students are ert; and you need an organic language learning to go with that.

I draw my model from the embryo. You have all seen books with a series of drawings or photos of the embryo or foetus at different stages; at a few weeks, a few months; and they show it growing from a single cell. Just fertilised, it is a simple circle, then the circle begins to change shape slightly into the foetal position. Then the foetus gets more complicated. You begin to see gradually the limbs, the head, the neck, and then the organs and veins, the pulmonary and vascular systems. The point is that it is never anything less than a whole, no matter which drawing or photograph, no matter which stage you take the photo of. You never see a part; it is always a whole. This is the thing about organic growth – it is not pieces put together; they do not add up like that. You have a whole all the time, and the parts are imminent within the whole from the very beginning, genetically coded, or whatever. So you have a differentiation of the whole into parts. The parts grow, but they are always within the whole. I think this is exactly the way vocabulary develops, and concepts, sentence structure, spelling, all of them – not to mention overall thought structure.

Intellectual growth certainly goes this way. I think transformational grammar describes sentence growth in this generative way. It is embryonic. Usually children's words start with a simple meaning. Take the idea "trade". At first it means bartering, like swapping baseball pictures, or something. Later in Social Studies trade comes to mean trading between tribes. Then comes international trade and the complex way we understand the balance of payments – you cannot witness it on any one occasion. That is the internal complication of the concept – it goes exactly like the embryo, involuting within a unity. I think this is the model we should follow in teaching – the holistic humanistic approach, so that you can have parts and whole at once. In fact, you have to. You have to have the creative personal learning and the basic skills at the same time, and not get into any dichotomy about it.

Chords and Melodies – Brain Research

I have been reading a lot recently about brain research of the last decade or so with the two hemispheres of the brain. They have been doing brain research for a long time – stimulating different parts with electrodes and surgery, removing certain parts of the brain and showing what functions they have. They are getting a very clear picture now that the brain is, in a sense, two brains, two hemispheres that specialise. They do not specialise, interestingly enough, until somewhere after the age of six. One way of putting it is that one goes verbal and one goes non-verbal. Up to then they both tend to do the same thing; they both do everything. Somewhere after the process of socialisation or acculturation really sets in, the kind of learning becomes linear, analytic, particle. (Language is, as McLuhan said, linear and analytical). In a sense, the research supports McLuhan, but from another quarter, that so far as I know, he did not know about at the time. Apparently integration is so important that in order to maintain the non-verbal, holistic thinking, the brain specialises and splits, as it were, so that part can accommodate verbal, social learning and the other half can continue to do the sort of organic thinking it was doing before. For most people who are right-handed, the left hemisphere (they cross) governs intellect, logical thinking (which is linear and analytic). It is verbal. It is also temporal because it orders things in time; in other words, it is serial – it takes bits and pieces and puts them in serial order. This serves a very definite function. You recognise that the way that functions is the direction in which you are being pushed to learn.

The right hemisphere is concerned with music, arts, crafts, sports; generally the non-verbal; intuitive rather than intellectual; spatial rather then temporal. This goes with the fact that one processes serially and the other simultaneously. My own metaphor for this puts the differences as between melodies and chords. In melodies, the notes are sounded serially, one after the other, and the tune is made up of the intervals between the notes and the other of the notes. With a chord, they are all sounded at once. The melodies and the chords represent two kinds of brain capacities. One is not cognitive and the other affective – they are *both* cognitive, they are *both* thinking. I emphasise that because it is not that one is serious and the other frills, or one is "basic skills" and the other one is not. The thinking that goes on with the right half – the sounding of chords – processes different kinds of things coming in at the same time. This is tremendously useful. We live in an intricate world, personally. We have tremendous international problems. These problems of intricacy are best solved by something that pulls things together into one single complex simultaneously rather than one after the other. We have been trying to solve personal and national and international political problems by the serial, analytical approach. That is half our thinking, but it will not solve intricate problems.

Successful Reading

Problems of reading and writing (using the definition that includes thinking and speaking) are very intricate. There is so much going on that you have to have the right hemisphere available or brains are not going to do very well. This half, by the way, is metaphoric; most language is metaphoric. Most words have several meanings. When you look up the etyomology there are several overlays of meanings, in addition to deliberate metaphor.

The metaphoric mode is a learning mode and a tremendously important cognitive mode, and the ability to process many things at once is exactly what makes a successful reader. He has meaning cues, grammar cues, and letter cues that all have to be processed together – it goes on very swiftly. Those who have described this process have called it shuttling and inter-shuttling all these cues at once. You would not even have to know all the spelling of English phonemes in order to be able to figure out some words, because if you get *some* of them sounded out, you can figure out some of the *others* by going by the meaning and sentence cues. Any reader uses these cues to figure out words he could not sound out otherwise. That is all very complex and it is all going on at once.

We really need, I think, to reassert the holistic, humanistic mode and shore up this right hemisphere. There are many people in education who are beginning to think this way, but if the methods and management of schools moves too far in the other direction, it is going to be very hard to do. I think it is important for teachers to know this and to see what is happening. If you agree with the analysis, do something about it – push for some reassertion of teaching the parts through the whole.

I am for getting back to the real basics – the ancient foundations of our civilisation, the great ideals of education based on unity and wholeness. That is where we began. If we are really going to go back to basics, let us go back to that – to wholeness and unity and harmony.

Patterns of Child Control of the Writing Process

Donald H. Graves
University of New Hampshire, USA.

Children want to write. For years we have underestimated their urge to make marks on paper. We have underestimated that urge because of a lack of understanding of the writing process, and what children do in order to control it. Without realising it we wrest control away from the children and place road blocks that thwart their intentions. Then we say, "They don't want to write. What is a good way to motivate them?"

Children show us how they seek to control writing when they go about composing. They show us their stumbling blocks and the orders in which they grow in the writing process. They do not show with any one behaviour, nor in an antiseptic laboratory setting. Rather they show us their growth patterns over a long period of time and in the setting where they normally function, the classroom. If we are going to help children, and not stand in the way of their gaining control of their own writing, we need to become familiar with what they do when they write. This evening I will report on two areas of data from our two-year study of how children gain control of the writing process, "Children's Transitions from Oral to Written Discourse" and "Children's Development in Revision".

Three researchers, Susan Sowers, Lucy Calkins and I, have just completed two years observing sixteen children in a small rural school in New Hampshire, USA. The sixteen children were chosen because of their differences in ability. Some hardly knew how to hold a pencil in first grade whereas some third graders were capable of writing eight to ten pages of a story. The children were followed in two clusters:

1. Grades one through two.
2. Grades three through four.

In this way we were able to map how children grew in control of the writing process over the first four years of school.

The sixteen children were observed directly in the classroom. That is, we did not gather information unless the teacher asked the children to write or the child chose to write. Information was gathered by hand recording or video taping child behaviours during the writing process. We also used interviews, structured interventions, and the analysis of children's writings. Everything that the children wrote in any subject area was xeroxed during the two years. In the main, the researchers attempted to gain information with the least interference to the children.

Still, we bear no illusions. The presence of the researchers had great influence. It is impossible to have three guests in a home for two years, every day, and not have an effect on the owners or residents. We had a specific policy of not conducting workshops with staff, or consciously seeking to change teacher direction. We had this policy because we

wanted to be good guests. If teachers, administrators, or parents wanted to ask about what we were doing, we would be happy to answer, or share our data on request. My suspicion is, that because we took this stance, we had many more professional-type questions than might ordinarily be expected. In a way, we ended up having more influence on environment than might be expected.

In spite of this influence we did not feel our objectives would be lost – that is, determining how children would grow in their control of the writing process. Our theory (and I believe the data holds us up) was that if teachers were comfortable with the teaching of writing, knew more about it, and responded effectively to the children, a wider range of development would ensue. In turn, we would gather more information. Furthermore, the *order of development would not be changed*, the order of problems solved would be basically unchanged, even though the rate of solution might be accelerated.

Since our research was designed to find out "what" was involved in the growth of children's control of the writing process, more than "why", we felt secure with this arrangement. One other very helpful outcome of this approach to research was that teachers themselves became collaborators in the research project. Since they maintained control of their teaching they became quite aggressive in stating their opinions about writing and the research data. Major contributions were made by the teachers. On countless occasions they had indispensable observations and records on the children.

Making the Transition from Speech to Print

There is much for children to learn to control in writing that is very different than speech. They must supply the context; write in a certain direction; learn to control the space-time dimensions of writing on a flat surface; understand what the media of writing can do; know the relation between sound and symbols; know how to make the symbols; learn to put symbols in a particular order; and while composing one operation, understand its relation to the entire order of what has been and will be in the message; and compose in a medium where the audience is not usually present.

When children first write they are fearless. Egocentricity has its own protective cloak. Children are merely concerned with getting the marks on the paper and usually getting it down for themselves. Children are quite pleased with their own competence and they experiment fearlessly with the new medium given a small amount of encouragement. Although children share work with others, this work is usually done for themselves. The behaviours displayed during writing are very similar to other play behaviours. Fortunately children are not aware of all the transition steps they are making from speech to print. The child is a delightful pragmatist and seems to be saying, "I want to get this writing down. I'm doing it because I want to and what I am putting down is not only interesting to me but to others as well".

Children's attempts to control the conventions of writing are marked by many holdovers from speech. For example, in speaking, the context is usually supplied by the parties to the communication. Charles and Edward are working in the block area and Charles wants Edward's curved block. Charles merely points to the curved block and says, "Give me that one".

But when Charles writes he must provide the setting through the words he supplies. Charles does not know how to provide the setting, the context for his writing. Instinctively he does much of this through drawing before he writes. The drawing provides double-duty. On the one hand it provides the setting for the text, on the other it serves as a rehearsal for what he will write.

Although speech is directional, when compared to the specifics of letter following letter on the prited page, it is non-directional. When children first write, their messages go in many directions. They may start in the middle, lower right, or upper left of the page and proceed in column form or diagonally, depending on the whim of the writer. If the child is aware of word separation, words may follow in column form, looping diagonals, even in a circle. In either case the child is aware that letters follow letters. Breaks for words are done by more advanced writers, again reflecting a written feature, since most words are run together in conversation – as do most words first written by the children.

Teachers permit most of the first grade children in our study to learn spelling via spelling inventions. That is, the child spells the word the way it sounds. Thus, from the first day children are able to use whatever sound-symbol relationships they know to produce messages. At this point it appears that a child who knows six sound-symbol relationships (usually consonants) can begin to write. And they do. This year on the first day of school Mrs Giacobbe, one of the first grade teachers, passed out bound, hard-covered books with the child's name in embossed letters on the outside. She merely said, "Write". Even though 30 per cent of the children had had no preschool experience they all wrote in their fashion. Some drew, others wrote their names, some put down numbers and letters, and about five wrote sentences. The important thing is that none of the children believed they could not write.

Spelling inventions make it possible for children to control their messages from the first day of school. In addition, our data show that the words evolve from crude spellings to greater refinement. Susan Sowers, research associate on the project, has taken all words used by different cases, and traced and dated their spelling evolutions during their first year in the study. The following is an example of a word tracing:

Toni's Pattern			*Sarah's Pattern*		
11/10	– LC	– Like	11/20	– FLLAOWZ	– flowers
	LAT	– liked		FLLAWRZ	
12/8	– LOCT	– liked		FLLAWR	– flower
12/19	– L	– like	1/11	– FLAWRS	
4/10	– LICT	– liked	6/1	– FLOWERS	
	KLIC	– like			
5/14	– LIKE				
5/21	– LIKE				

At first the children feel little control since they know too few sound-symbol relationships to provide enough cues to recognise it again. Toni's "LC" or "L" above for *like* may be difficult to read at a later time. On the other hand "LICT" gives more cues. It is an important moment when the child is able to compose, and read back his information from the page. In several instances we were able to be present with our video cameras when

the child first realised he had the power to read his own message. "I don't know how I do-ed that", one child said.

Putting symbols in order is a difficult task for many children. The ordering of symbols is quite dependent on the speed with which a child recognises sound-symbol relationships from his own speech and the speed with which the letter is written. Sometimes the process is so slowed down by the difficulty the child has in retrieving the letter unit from his own speech that the full context of the message is lost. In Figure 1, notice how Jamie makes sounds to produce the correct sound-symbol relationship, yet must continually re-orient himself to where he is in the message. Jamie produces the message so slowly that the text is obliterated by the next sound-symbol he encounters. He then must re-read from the beginning each time in order to add the new letter in a word. The first line in Figure 1 indicates the point at which the letter was written in relation to the second line, the sounds produced by the child.

Figure 1 shows just how much language and sound Jamie must produce to sequence the letter for his message, "A tornado went by here now". It took him fifteen minutes to write his *unassigned* message. How easy it is to assume that Jamie struggles because he must produce a product. Jamie does not know he is supposed to be having difficulty. Jamie had just seen an account of a tornado's destruction on television and wanted to write about it. Jamie wrote this message in December at the bottom of a drawing he had already composed on tornados. Note how few cues are in this message for Jamie to read. In fact, he could not read the sentence, only "tornado".

Figure 1: Jamie's Composing

Writing Line	A								X	N												
Sound Line	T	T	T	N	Ae	to	na	do	D	D	D											
Comment Line					erases																	
					M	(tornado)																
					makes an																	
					N																	
Writing Line	D																				A	
Sound Line	D	D	Ae	to	na	do	Ae	oo	au	Ae	To	na	do									
Comment Line	Stops to check letter chart																					

Most young writers who make the transition from oral to written discourse must produce language and sound when they write. The following are some of the different types recorded thus far from our video transcripts:

1. *Sounding* to probe for sound-symbol relation.
2. *Sounding* to "break off" a phonemic unit from the word under attack.
3. *Re-reading language* for re-orientation in the composing unit. The child must hear where he is in the text. The difficulty or length of time spent on the composing operation determines how much the writer must re-read.
4. *Conversations with friends:* "This monster is going to eat up all the good guys".
5. *Procedural language:* "Now what am I going to do? No, this isn't right. I need to change it". Procedural language is a more advanced form of transition from speech to print.

6. *Advanced statement of the text:* The child says the text in order to sense the appropriateness of the current word. "He *cast* the line into the stream". The child is now writing "cast" but wants to make sure it fits correctly into the rest of the sentence. This is very different from Jamie who has to say everything *before* the current operation. "A tornado come *by*". "By" is the word under draft but is determined syntactically by all that has preceded it, not by what may lie ahead.
7. Conversations before and after the composing: Not only is the child speaking during the composing, but language surrounds the entire written event. *Before:* "I'm going to write about monsters today. And you know what, the good guys are going to lose." *After:* "I'm finished, Mrs. Giacobbe, and everybody's killed. Look at 'em here, all burned up. See, this ray gun (pointing to the picture, not the text) cooked every one of 'em".

In summary, the amount of language a child must produce before, during and after the written event is paramount. Beginning writers show by voice alone that writing is much more a *speech* event than a writing event. A careful assessment of the nature of language the child supplies also gives us a picture of where the child is in his control of the writing process. These are data that make it possible for the teacher to help the child gain, and maintain control of his own writing.

As children gain more distance on the writing process they deal with new issues in making the transition from speech to print. Children speak less, make fewer vocalisations, and show more prosodics in their writing. That is, more speech forms appear in the writing. Ask the child to read while you observe his paper. The child will show with his voice how he uses prosodics. Examples of some of the prosodics are the following:

- Capitalisation of important words – "Jumped".
- Capitalisation of the entire word – "The fish BIT!"
- Blackening in important words.
- Underlining important words.

Children also place more sound in their text through the use of interjections, dialogue, and exclamation marks.

These features enter texts toward the end of the first grade. They come at a point when children grow in audience sense, gain skill in reading, and become interested in conventions. All three of these factors seem to occur simultaneously. They are accompanied by child statements that show distance, yet show a disturbance about their new lack of control in composing: "This is stupid. This isn't what I want. I used to be able to write good, but I can't anymore. I don't like the sound of this".

Later as children gain more control of their information, and realise that the data are strong enough to support themselves without prosodic markers, the markers fade. At this point children have usually moved into much more advanced uses of revision, sustaining a single selection over several weeks. New levels of control have been reached. The child writes to find out more what he means. The writing, as we shall see in Lucy Calkins data on revision, becomes clay, is malleable, and does not need such explicit speech markers.

Summary of Principles

A number of principles emerge in reviewing how children gain control of making the transition from speaking to writing:

- At first children need to hear and see what they mean. They control their writing through drawing and speaking as they write, and in discussing the writing with friends and the teacher. Writing is more speech than writing.
- As children gain distance on the process of relating sounds to symbols, and handwriting issues are put behind them, they become more dissatisfied with their text and look for new ways to insert speech features.
- At first writing is a highly egocentric exercise. Later, as the child gains more distance on the text and other children provide different responses, he realises the message needs to be changed.

Children's Development in Revision

When children revise they demonstrate their changing visions of information, levels of thinking, what problems they are solving, and their level of control over the writing process. Revision is not only an important tool in a writer's repertoire, but is one of the best indices of how children change as writers. For this reason, the data on revision has been one of the most important aspects of our study of children's writing.

Consistent with transitions from speech to print, children first revise their drawings because the drawings are more important. If children feel their drawing is accurate, the text is seldom changed. Simple changes in syntactical accuracy, changing words because of the way they are formed on the page, or the addition of words for the sake of feeling are typical of first revisions.

At first children write for the sake of writing. They enjoy putting marks on paper. Their composing behaviours are play-like. The decision to write, the composing and completion of a selection may all occur in the space of ten to fifteen minutes. The child does not look back. Attempts to "revise" the completed work with the child are sometimes met with diffidence or polite participation. The concept of the work as a message, usable at another place and time, is not necessarily understood by the child.

For this reason it is all the more important for the teacher to "revisit" the writing through the give and take of an oral conference. The conference becomes the bridge between past and present in which the child gains distance on the content and the concept of what writing can do. Furthermore, the conference is an invaluable source of information for both the teacher and child. Conferences run from three to twenty minutes. Transcripts of hundreds of teacher-child conferences over the two-year period have given us a valuable profile of the child's control of the writing process. Barbara Kamler of Riverina College at Wagga Wagga, who just spent six months with us at the research site, has written a very important article for the September issue of *Language Arts* (NCTE), in which she documents myriads of influences on one child's written selection as it developed over a two to three week period. Her work closely documents the many functions of the language conference through actual transcripts between teacher and child and the child with other children.

The language conference that focuses on the child's paper is the cornerstone of children's revison. As the teacher revisits the child's paper, listens

to the voice of the child as the paper is read, or notices the child's uneasiness about some information, the seeds of the child's desire to revise are observed.

Children wish the new information were in the text when they have chosen a topic that they feel is an important one in their own lives – one worth publishing, one containing information of interest to other children, or one that is of great length. When these first grade children "revise", the revision is usually in the form of adding information at the beginning or end of the selection. Seldom does it occur in the interior of the text. Disturbing the interior of the text is much more sophisticated than dealing with initial and final states.

Even though the strength of the topic is a strong determinant in the child's interest in revision, several other factors are involved. First, the child needs to spell and write comfortably, having enough speed so that extra writing does not become a penalty. Second, the child must have help in dealing with some of the effects of his first experiences with audience. Third, the child gets help in dealing with spatial-aesthetic issues of changing the text.

When the child has sufficient speed in the motor, sound-symbol components, and the general ordering of these on the page, he can attend more to the text. No longer is the child losing sense of syntax because of the demands of spelling and letter formation. Now when the child is asked, "And then what will happen?", the child is able to answer several sentences ahead, whereas before, the child was unable to think beyond the next word. In short, the child is now operating in a much broader space-time frame on the text and can have greater distance on the information.

With distance the child does not find freedom. New problems of control arise. The child can usually read well enough now to recognise the discrepancy between intentions and what, in fact, has occurred in the text. The child does not necessarily like what he sees. Up to this time egocentricity has provided a protective mask, pushing the child into playful activity when writing. Audiences may have responded negatively to what he has done, but the child does not hear. He believes the audience has major problems: *he* does not.

At the end of their first formal year of schooling, many children shed their egocentric masks. When they do, they are not unlike the butterfly emerging from the chrysalis: weak, floppy, grotesque in movement, yet full of promise. They begin to hear the comments of classmates and teachers. They are aware of a discrepancy between their intentions and what is on the paper. "It doesn't sound good", says the child. The child wants to change the selection but often does not know how. Children may cease to write, avoid writing, or turn to the stronger suit of reading. For many young writers this is a highly vulnerable time, one that calls for an understanding teacher in conferences, a teacher who has helped the class to become a good audience. More than ever, a teacher's comments need to be specific; careful listening to the child's voice as the paper is discussed, is required.

A third element that stands in the way of children's control of revision at this time is the spatial-aesthetic issue. Children simply do not know how to fit in the new information. The teacher must say, "Show me where you want to put what you have just said". The child may not be able to locate where the information should go. If the child can locate it, he may still not know the mechanics of inserting information. Writing up margins, drawing

arrows, putting in a caret, are not tools that are part of the child's repertoire. Up to this point most of the children have erased words or several sentences when changes were made. But looking through the child's eyes, this question arises, "How do you put something in when you don't want to change what's already there?" Splicing is new territory. The child needs help.

Revision presents an aesthetic barrier. The reason most children erase is to preserve the appearance of the paper. This occurs even in rooms where teachers stress lining out, or drawing arrows as a revising procedure. Children erase because they want the text to be right the first time.

Have you ever observed children during the moment of their first encounter with a new piece of blank paper? Note how many times they "clean" it before writing on it. They stroke, brush, even blow away imaginary dust. The cleaning continues during and after writing as well.

The following writing conference demonstrates a child in transition and how the teacher helped him deal with the spatial-aesthetic issues:

Teacher: I see that you were able to put in the word "may" to show that "Brontosaurus *may* travel in families". (Chris had been able to sandwich in the small word without erasing.) But you didn't say why they travel in families.

Chris: They travel in families to protect their young.

Teacher: Do you think that is important information?

Chris: Yes, but there isn't any place to put it. (Chris's writing goes from left to right over to the right hand margin at the bottom of the paper. Above this writing is a picture of a brontosaurus.)

Teacher: Look the paper over and show me where you could write it in.

Chris: There isn't any . . . (voice rising).

Teacher: Look the entire paper over and put your hand on any space where there isn't writing or drawing. (There is a space above the drawing.)

Chris: Well, I could put it up here (motions to the top of the paper) but it would look stupid. The other part is down here.

Teacher: How could you show they were connected?

Chris: I could put an arrow down here pointing to the part that's at the top.

Teacher: Good, but you'll need to connect the arrow with the top. This is what writers do when they are getting their books ready for the publisher.

What does not show in the dialogue is Chris's concern about drawing the line connecting the information from the bottom to the top. Although he came up with a solution for the placement of information, he was not satisfied with the appearance of the product. He was pleased to know what professional writers would do when they wrote, but still may wish to re-copy the text.

Revision in the Upper Primary Grades

Lucy McCormick Calkins, research associate on this study, has completed a major work on revision practices of third grade children. She has identified four kinds of revisers from observation of child behaviours during writing, the analysis of their drafts, and data gathered from their attempts to revise a text written by Calkins about a common classroom experience. In the last of these, the children were directed to revise a text filled with informational

inaccuracies. They first told the researcher what they felt should be changed. Then they changed the text on the page they had just criticised.

Calkins has particularly attended to how children change their use of information when revising. She asks such questions as: "How does the information change between first and last drafts? When children move from one draft to another, how do they use the last draft when they compose the new one? What are the changing strategies that children use as they advance in the writing process?" Her report of this phase of our study will appear in the fall issue of *Research in the Teaching of English* (NCTE).

Calkins found that children's strategies followed time-space development in a very consistent way. The degree to which they were able to control revision was dependent on their ability to use the draft from one page to the next, their ability to infuse information into the text, then to manipulate information from one page to another. These abilities show in the practices of the four types of revisers:

Type I

These children write successive drafts without looking back to earlier drafts. Because they do not re-read and reconsider what they have written, there is no comparison or weighting of options. Changes between drafts seem arbitrary. Rewriting appears to be a random, undirected process of continually moving on. In their own writing they have many unfinished writing selections. They learn little from draft to draft. On the common classroom exercise, they might come up with new information but could only add it on to the end of selections.

Type II

These children keep refining earlier work but the refinement is of minor consequence. The content and structure of their writing does not change. Some spelling, punctuation, or a word or two might be changed, but that is all. On the common classroom exercise, these children, unlike *Type I* children, would look back at the text and come up with new information, but could not insert the data in the text.

Type III

These children move between periods when they refine drafts and periods when they are continually abandoning them and beginning new ones. At times they appear to be like *Type I* children, but they are closer to being *Type II* children. Moreover, their periods of restless discontent with their drafts indicate that they are in transition to the next level, *Type IV*. On the common classroom exercise, they are able to insert the information convincingly into the text. Their restlessness seems to come from the higher standards they have set themselves.

Type IV

For these children, revision results from interaction between writer and draft, between writer and internalised audience, between writer and evolving subject. They re-read to see what they have said and to discover what they want to say. There is a constant vying between intended meaning and discovered meaning; between the forward motion of making and the backward motion of assessing. On the common classroom exercise, these

children immediately asked if they could change parts of it. One change led to another. Arrows, lines, stars and carets were used to change and insert information.

Lest all of these revision data sound too cut and dried, it is important to mention one child, Amy, who does not fit this pattern of development. Amy was a good writer from the start of her study but did not revise. She was the kind of child who would sit down to write and produce the following lead about cheetahs: "A cheetah would make a sports car look like a turtle". Her first drafts were better than most of the *Type IV* children who did extensive revisions. For a year-and-a-half Amy baffled us both with the quality of her writing and her lack of revisions. Amy could tell by our questions that we did not understand how she went about composing. I think she enjoyed our perplexity.

In April of this year she informed Lucy Calkins:

> I think I know how I write. The other night I was lying in bed and I couldn't get to sleep. I was thinking, "I wonder how I will start my fox piece in the morning". It was 9.30 at night and Sidney my cat was next to me on the bed. I thought and thought and couldn't figure how to start it. Finally, about 10.30, my sister came home and she turned on the hall light. Now my door has a round hole where there ought to be a lock. A beam of light came through the hole and struck Sidney in the face. Sidney went "squint". Then I knew how I would start my fox piece: "There was a fox who lived in a den and over the den was a stump and in the stump was a crack and a beam of light came through the crack and struck the fox full in the face".

Amy is an excellent artist with an eye for detail and the language to go with what she sees. She does many off-stage rehearsals of what she will write. From this incident we merely get a glimpse of what she must do as she goes her own way composing. Fortunately she has a teacher who does not assign revisions just for the sake of revision.

Final Reflection

These data on children's transition from speech to print and on the process of revision provide a base for observing children as they change in the writing process. These data are not cast in concrete. They must be viewed within the limitation of the setting in which they were gathered. I think the data show us *what ingredients* are significant in observing children's growth as writers.

I am frequently asked, "What can I do to speed up children's growth as writers? What can I do as a teacher to move the children from a *Type I* to a *Type IV* writer?" It is natural to want children to progress. But our anxieties about child growth lead us to take control of the writing away from the children. We want to produce materials or come up with methods that unfortunately convince children that the source of control of their writing — their dedication — is such that they violate the child labour laws. We could never assign what they choose to do.

The teachers at our site have taught me a great deal in these two years of inservice training for researchers. They have slowed the process of teaching down in such a way that children have begun to catch up to what they already know. They listen for children's intentions to emerge, observe where they are in their development, and then find ways to provide the appointment for the child to control what he is doing.

Children will continually surprise us if we let them. As in Amy's case, when everyone seems to fit a pattern, if we look carefully, many do not. This may seem to lessen the importance of growth patterns across children. I think it heightens their importance. They are a solid base from which we can see the important differences in each child. And every child has them. As the study goes on, we have become more fascinated with the differences in children than in their similarities. This is what happens when we slow down, listen, and let the children lead. That is the joy of both research and teaching.

Children's Literature: Mainstream Text or Optional Extra?

Margaret Spencer
Institute of Education, University of London

This essay may go a long way round to tell its readers what they already know well: that what we read, and the ways in which we go about reading, consititute what we think reading is. By extension, the way we teach children to read, what we offer them as reading experiences, forms their view of reading as an activity until they are able or allowed to choose for themselves whether they will read or not. What the *learners* – and that means pupils for all their time in school – are invited or compelled to read, establishes their notion of readership. It also confirms their understanding of the values society attaches to what they are doing.

The argument is a simple one and not new. Graham Greene (1975), for instance, affirms that what he read before he was fourteen influenced all that he wrote. But like many simple obvious things in life, so important that we take them for granted, the implications of this view of reading has rarely been exploited to the full on behalf of children at school. I am offering, therefore, a speculation with pedagogic attachments based on work with children, teachers, and books of all kinds, hoping thereby to move towards a synthesis that links two of the most significant aspects of our English language culture: literacy and literature.

If I begin by asking "who knows about reading", the answer has to be "everyone who reads". But most people's knowledge of the reading *process* is of the tacit, personal variety. Readers know what reading is and recognise the activity in others, as you do when I glance at my page then speak to you. You know what I mean by reading a novel or timetable, and all the kinds of reading that include reading the signs of mood at breakfast, reading-off the computer print-out, reading the mind's expression in the face, and listening to a walkie-talkie radio which says "Do you read me". Experienced readers operate reading processes without regard to them; they are more interested in their purposes and intentions, to read a letter, to enjoy this poem, this story, to know what X has discovered, to check what Y claims against what Z has proved. Paradoxically, expert readers rarely claim to be reading experts. Reading about reading – meta reading – is another activity entirely. Its field is education, its implications are psychological, social, pedagogical, political and literary. It is an interdiscipline which, on the whole, those who enjoy reading and do a lot of it, avoid like the plague.

The place of power in knowing about reading, reading expertise, has been pre-empted by psychologists. You can understand why. Reading is the perfect example of school learning and teaching. A child comes to school unable to do what the school exists to teach, and two years later has mastered something to which the rest of his educational progress will be related and by which it will be judged both inside school and in the world at

large. The teaching-and-learning process is then demonstrated and generalised. What has happened to the child in these two years and how it is generalised are the root of the divisions in the psychology and methodology of the teaching of reading. No other educational incident generates as much research, money, publishing, teacher education and doctrinal disarray as the psychological expertise related to reading and how it is taught. The number of published papers on reading is reaching the quarter million mark. In psychological terms we have no lack of reading expertise. But we do not know which aspects of that expertise have actually made a difference to the way children come to know what real reading is, and how they learn to be readers. We are bound to note, however, that most of it is the pathology of failure rather than an understanding of success.

The behaviourist psychologists especially seem to have used the funds at their disposal to generate teacher unease rather than to find out why a few children do not want to learn to read. For too long they have separated reading from its natural embedding in children's language development, in their culture, especially in the literature and folklore of childhood. They have severed its links with writing, and by insisting that reading, unlike speech, is not a *natural* thing to do, have made teachers anxious about methodology and dependent upon such materials, kits, games, machines and devices which in themselves are not reading matter that any genuine writer would write. What teachers may once have known about reading from their own enjoyment of it is rated as of no account in the face of the mass of technological programming which they are, more often than not, bound to administer to their classes. In short, behaviourist psychology has offered a model of reading which, in British and North American schools at least, has boiled down to the idea that children must be *taught* to read in ways which reinforce certain segments of reading behaviour, before they can be given something that is worth reading. In many schools, children get a real book as a reward for identifying words in an unreal book, ironically called "a reader".

Our chief indebtedness to the recent work of the psycholinguists is that they have recovered our understanding of reading and its relation to language development, perception, experience and the intention of the reader. They have redressed the balance in terms of the child learning rather than of the teacher teaching. The child's linguistic competences replace the *tabula rasa* of the behaviourists. The teacher is now a collaborator, whose enlightenment comes from a study of language development and the active, productive operations of children's talk and writing. Ken and Yetta Goodman opened up wider perspectives for all reading teachers when they showed that miscues were not mistakes, but "windows on the reading process". The next move was for the teacher to look through the window to see what sources of linguistic power lay within the reader and to make these work for his ultimate autonomy.

But old habits die hard. Every new insight is regarded as a potential solution to an already defined problem, rather than a reconstruing of the total situation. Miscue analysis can become, in some hands, another form of error counting, and the psycholinguistic contribution to reading studies is often spoken of as a "method" or an "approach". The basic learning model may have been shaken up, but I doubt if it has changed much. When we talk of educational "problems" we condition teachers to expect "solutions" so that the indirect relationship of sound theory to classroom

practice sometimes seems disappointing. For all that they have transformed a whole generation of reading teachers, Frank Smith and the Goodmans have not altogether broken through the barrier that keeps the teaching of reading in a special educational enclave. I believe one reason for this is that their view of reading is still, at bottom, one of information retrieval – getting from the page what the author put there.

I want to suggest that readers, in their multiplicity and multifariousness can make more meaning of a text than the author was intently master of. To do this I want to relate my understanding of the reading process, deepened as it indubitably has been by those who have given me psycholinguistic insights, to questions about how children come to know how different kinds of texts are to be read, and how reading experience accumulates. This means asking such questions as: what is actually happening when a child of any age chooses to read one book right to the end rather than another? What goes on at the interface of text and a reader's "decoding" of it. For example, on the first page of *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes, the word "brink" which one could expect to be "decoded" by traditional "phonic attack", often causes difficulty, whereas the idea of a head being "as big as a bedroom" causes none. What kind of an explanation accounts for a reader's idea of setting off on a journey with a Hobbit, or how he understands in reading *Rosie's Walk* (at the age of less than five) that the story is not in the text but emerges from a bond of understanding with the author that the fox is at the centre of the drama. What do people who read know about reading that would help me to understand the occurrence of certain linguistic, psychological, literary events in the cumulative experience of a young reader? How, for instance, does one learn about suspense? What confirms the reading habit in some children so that they become expert in their turn, while others, not incompetent in any real sense, try to avoid every reading task that comes their way? Partly at least, the answers must lie in what willing readers have read.

As you know, the Schools Council of Great Britain pursued this idea and conducted a massive counting exercise which was produced as *Children and their Books* (1977). For all the care lavished on it, the research foundered on the researchers' failure to make satisfactory critical discriminations among the books that the children had read. The research shows clearly how well we have learned to conduct sociological surveys; the sampling is exemplary. (Why is no one surprised when the children of manual workers come at the bottom of the list of those who read voluntarily?) But when it comes to defining the nature of literary experience, or the attraction that a book holds for a particular child, the categories of definition are crude in the extreme. In this particular research, books are either *juvenile* or *adult*, and of *quality* ("generate a texture of imaginative experience") or *non-quality* ("production essentially a commercial matter"). Exempt from these distinctions – made by researches not readers – are fairy tales, myths and legends, annuals and non-narrative books. Presumably if a tale of Enid Blyton's totally transforms an eight-year-old's view of reading – a not unusual event – the book still remains in the category of commercial rubbish.

In all of that huge survey, what children might have or could have offered as evidence, was set at naught unless it had a place in the questionnaire, which like many others, carried its expected results in the very forms of its asking. So we are still in the dark as to why very competent readers

stay with familiar books instead of reading new ones, why girls abandon books in their teens and many boys have views of reading we never hear about because most of what they read is passed over as insignificant. The report insisted that teachers "should be enabled to bring forward at the right time the book which uniquely matches a child's reading capacity, interests and current state of development". If only we knew what such enablement would consist of, then, surely, the right book at the right time would be more easily provided.

Statements of this kind allow us to slide too easily past where the real lions sit – at the gateway to our understanding of what we are about. It is much easier to count the number of books children read in a given month and to turn that into an absolute quantity, as if ten novels by P. G. Woohouse equal *War and Peace*, (all "adult quality novels" in the Schools Council Study), than to know exactly what a pupil who has never read a whole book on his own actually does when he "goes it alone" for the first time. The saddest thing of all is that children offer us the evidence we need, but we so rarely see it for what it is.

In all the multifloriate reading research the greatest shortcoming is a persistent refusal on the part of those who undertake it to acknowledge or examine the kind of evidence that does not yield to statistical treatment. We are still pursuing reading standards when we might fare better if we examined reading *style*, and what children tell us they get out of reading and what they actually do.

Suppose, however, that we could begin with expert readers (that is as opposed to reading experts) to see what they could tell us, where would we go? I am always surprised by how little regard teachers pay to the reading expertise of librarians. We have been content to let them keep their own counsel about it. When most teachers were indifferent to the possibilities latent in books for children by writers of talent, librarians were the guardians of children's literature. The body of distinguished authorship owes them much. Mostly women, and therefore undervalued, they have sorted, sifted, displayed, promoted and distributed books for children. They have given the prizes, arranged the exhibitions and known the books well. For many years librarians have been nearer than teachers to the very evidence we need to tell us about *response*. Many a librarian has salvaged a child wrecked on the reefs of classroom practice or turned a dreary teacher-pleasing project into a child-delighting one. But on the whole, librarians have excluded themselves from studying how and why children read in relation to *what* they read. By modelling their activities on the professional readers of adult fiction, they have praised most highly the books that pay most tribute to the intelligence of those who read them, that "make demands", as the saying goes, on their readers.

Very few librarians, at home as they are behind the crenellations of book stacks and stocks, understand that even the most attractively decorated children's library can be a fearsome place. To take out a library book is to enter into a contractual obligation about not tearing, soiling, losing or being late with it, all of which is sanctioned by the kind of officialdom that some families have too much of already. Until lately there were few library paperbacks. The reasons are economic, and include the fact that the authors actually need the money that comes from a year's hardback sale. Then, reading is a solitary, anti-social act on the whole, and libraries do not encourage collaborative reading. The influence of television on children's

reading is appreciated by publishers but not by librarians who have little idea that the popularity of horror stories and science fiction owes much to television. Children are quick to spot books that patronise them, but somehow observations about this never find their way into the critical appraisals that librarians read. What librarians know about children's reading they try to turn into criticism of a rather outmoded kind in booklists or reviewing journals.

Because their work brings them into contact with those who like reading and do a lot of it in public places, librarians are still regarded as "those who know about kids' books" in a way that undervalues what they know. We rarely ask them to tell us what they hear children say about books. They are never invited to contribute to developmental studies of children's reading. They have reported very little on *how* they decide what they can offer children. Standing as they do between teachers who believe in reading schemes and parents who would rather buy toys, librarians hear and see many initiations into reading that could contribute greatly to our understanding. Simply because they are not teachers, children talk freely to them.

We have not yet grasped what we can do with this kind of reading expertise. For example, Elaine Moss, a librarian, broadcaster, critic, and champion of books for children, especially for the very young, has made studies of children's interactions with picture books that has no counterpart in any official "research" that I have seen. In her paper (1981) to the Library of Congress, she reports of how a child explained to her why Peter Rabbit's mother bought only five buns and not six in such a way as to throw light on the young reader's understanding of Mr Rabbit's fate, and which indicate that our discussions of "death in children's books" seems a great deal of pussyfooting nonsense. In addition Mrs Moss has powerful insights into the process called "getting into a story" especially at the early stage of "wandering round inside the picture".

As we shall see again, one of the crucial features of learning to read extended text is to know one episode is linked with another. Now we can relate this kind of evidence to our most recent research in language development – Gordon Wells' longitudinal studies in Bristol. We can see how Dr Wells' (1979) assertion that "Of all the factors considered from both home and school, level of attainment in literacy at age seven years was most powerfully predicted by the child's academic readiness for entry to school, and specifically by his knowledge about the activities of *reading and writing*" has the support of Elaine Moss's actualities. "Academic readiness" for Dr Wells is "knowing what a book is", that is understanding what readers and writers do by approximating to a reader's kind of behaviour. As James Britton once said "the child who opens a book and pretends to read a story is actually nearer to the heart of the matter of reading than one who recites lists of words, however correctly". In assessing the contribution of reading experts to what we need to know about reading, we must bring the librarians closer to the centre of things and give them access to the kinds of academic study that would make them more confident in pronouncing on the significance of what they hear, see and do.

You have already guessed, no doubt, that we are on our way to associate the expertise of young readers with that of English teachers. As we pass, we must make a statutory nod in the direction of readers who are so expert that they do it for a living, namely the critics.

On the whole, criticism of children's books is still a coterie affair. Just as children's authors are constantly rebelling against the implied judgement that to write for the young people is to be stuck in apprenticeship, so critics of books written for an audience that includes children become over-sensitive about their role, or over-serious about books which often must be ephemeral. The critical reviewing of children's books, in which I have a large and serious interest, has practically no effect, no noticeable effect, on what children are offered to read in school, especially at this time of publishing recession. There is a wide and genuine concern that children should have "good" books and many books. But critics steer clear of any real engagement with topics such as " what is to be literate at the present time and what contribution does children's literature make to this?" They seem to be quite unmoved by how most books for children that originate in England confirm the same pattern of childhood culture – the Anglo-Saxon middle class one.

Even the most sensitive and informed criticism of books for children takes less account of readers than it should. Detached as they are from the processes of cognitive and affective development as this relates to experience drawn from books, critics are embarrassed by the idea that some books are written for an audience more specialised than the wider world of generalised adults. They resist the notion that children's books should be given a different kind of attention. "A book is a book", they say, and critics are special readers of all kinds of books. Most critics have only the crudest awareness of what makes a text difficult for a young reader. They are not equipped to understand children's awareness of narrative and the kind of literary skills they possess. Nor do they give much attention to how a writer makes a story cohere for his younger readers; how the sentences stop, start, turn, change over, or how the whole fabric of illusory events "takes its appearance and emotional value from the way the statements that actually compose the story are worded" (Langer, 1953). Few critics want to understand what a less experienced reader has to *do* to enjoy Leon Garfield's coruscations and ornamentations of prose style. Reading a book with children in mind I find myself asking: "How is this to be read? Who are its readers and what is its way of telling?" I wonder often who else is thinking about *first* experiences of certain kinds of literature as the young meet them.

The young read in innocence, less, perhaps, of the events than of the ways of telling devised to bring the reader into a bond with the author and the nature of the plot. Critics write from experience, as do all adults engaged in the production of books for children. I fully understand, however, that critics find it difficult to take seriously teachers' attitudes to children's books. When critics see teachers urging children to bark at the print of a reading scheme, or to engage in the non-reading activities associated with reading laboratories, or to hammer out the stock responses to the *morceaux choisis* of the examination syllabus, they must wonder if this is what reading is really about.

So you see, those who know about what there is to be read, the critics and the librarians, and those who are reading experts, the psychologists, even the sociologists and the socio-linguists who are now entering upon the studies of literacy, all make contributions to the study of reading. But the essence of the thing that you and I know about when we read is still slipping through our fingers. The fact is that reading lacks a unifying idea,

the single point of view of the kind that Saussure adopted towards language and then let the whole of modern linguistics take off. Reading has no kind of analysis that Propp offered of the form of folk tale so that its manifestations in all cultures could be related. Reading has no Saussure, no Propp, no Piaget, no Bruner. We are not even sure, after the earliest stages of children learning to read, what we should be looking at. We are still unsure, despite the thousands of studies, which the *pertinent* ones are. We know that we can no longer say what it is to be well read. There is no common ideology, no unifying principle, that says the well-read student has read Dante, Wordsworth, Borges. We are free to read what we like, and to abandon reading all together. The Schools Council enquiry, with every kind of expertise to command well-organised sampling and questionnaires of unprecedented sensitiveness, discovered only that some children read more than others, that a good teacher who knew about books had more effect than one who did not, that reading needs time in class as well as at home and that enough solitude for reading much is rare.

In our pursuit of reading certainty we have left unremarked some of the most imaginative and creative enterprises because they combined economic and entrepreneurial inventiveness with plain commonsense and were therefore discounted as evidence. For instance, for fifteen years Kaye Webb has mounted and run Puffin exhibition in artistically indulged London. The walls are covered with children's writing: poems, jokes, factual accounts, stories, pastiches, satires, word play and the rest in exotic abundance, all done by children for *fun*. But as far as I know this annual display figures as evidence in neither research nor commentary, as if its very spontaneous exuberance – the children do it all because it pleases them; no teacher is near – could not guarantee its authenticity.

If we look for an overlap in the work of the known reading experts in order to single out what is pertinent to the way we understand what makes children into readers, we find that we have somehow to associate the process of learning to read with what is written to be read, right from the start; that the reading process lies where the reader meets the writer in the encounter generated by the text. The teacher's job is to bring the two together.

My conviction about this comes from trying, over a number of years, to listen to what children actually say about reading – how they do it, and what they prefer to read. When they are not constrained by the form or expectations of a teacher's question, when they carry on after the question has been answered, or when they initiate a conversation of their own, they produce evidence to which we have paid all too little attention. The most interesting stage is between the age of ten and eleven where differences of viewpoint can be attributed to reading experience. Eleven-year-olds are still fairly wide-ranging in their preferences for what they want to read; only the specialist few have developed literary competences derived from subject matter (for example, how to read a book about sailing or fishing: the expertise comes not from reading but from the activity). At this age, too, children's writing is strongly influenced by what they read. More particularly, eleven-year-olds who cannot read or read less well than they are expected to, are simply *inexperienced* in ways that we have taken too little trouble to find out about.

When we look at children of this age whose reading can be accounted as expert, we find that much of what they know about reading has never been

taught to them. They could learn it only from literature or from attempts to write in a manner they associate with stories or books they have read or heard.

For instance, the folklore of childhood, with its powerful rhythms, rhymes and rituals lays down a bedrock that we so take for granted that we fail to notice other appearances of it. The totemism of what the Opies (1961) taught us to call "The lore and language of school children", the oral tradition, has its literary parallels. "I'm the king of the castle" is the essence of Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* just as the rhythm of nursery rhymes ensures the success of Michael Rosen's poems (1976). In children's oral culture, whoever passes on the rhyme or the ritual becomes its author. Initiation into the *written* forms of these tropes, spells and exorcisms, in fairy tales, or folk tales, for instance, keeps some of the authorial power for the reader. In its magic tokening, learning to read is akin to being let into the gang and made privy to its secrets.

You can see an earlier form of this when young children try to control the world by word magic. Later, in their growing wisdom, they discover that authors are the magicians who make secondary worlds available and approachable where the laws of nature can be as, Aidan Warlow (1977) says, 'suspended or amended'. There is a point in children's language development when metaphor and ambiguity *are* reality. ("If you don't stop scowling", says a mother, "the wind will change and your face will stay like that.") Later, they read a story where the wind does change, and something unexpected does happen. . . . The evidence for the potency and permanence of these early encounters with oral culture comes when you try to teach reading to a child who has no recollection of nursery rhymes. In the case I know best, I was constrained to examine the gap between a child who had no idea who Mother Hubbard was, or what she had done, and a teacher who could not imagine a child without this literary background.

By the time they are twelve, most competent readers can distinguish between the conventions of fable, folk tale, fantasy, realism, action-based narrative and feelings-based narrative. They know, in practice if not by explanation, the difference between showing and telling. They can sort out for themselves the pastiche of a book like *The Sword in the Stone* by distinguishing the different "tunes" when they read it aloud. They can distinguish the narrative style of *Kes* from that of *The Iron Man* and they know how to read a funny poem as a joke. All of this seems to happen spontaneously. When did the competent readers discover their part in making the meaning of the first sentence of *Charlotte's Web* which set the place, time, action and protagonists in one clean dramatic question? Less competent readers, especially those taught over a long period from specially constructed material without individual experience of reading for their own pleasure but always to satisfy their teachers, can "decode" the words but not get the point. They know that something crucial is escaping them. You can tell this from their intonation when they read aloud. They re-scan the text which, by itself, often does not give them the tune, the voice on the page.

Next, using a clue offered by James Moffett (1968), we can discover from children of this age how they come to know who is the "I" of the first person narrative. Mr Moffett suggests that, when they write, children move from themselves outwards, but when they read they move inwards, so that the big empty categories of giants, woodcutters, boys called Jack, are

where they put themselves. If you want to see what children make of "I" stories – and there's a definite moment when they say they do not like them – the significant books are *Black Beauty* – where the narrator is a horse – and *Treasure Island* – where the storyteller is a 19th century boy. (For children in England, still subject to the choices of oldies like me, there is the extra subtlety of *The Treasure Seekers.*) "I" the reader and "I" the author are both concerned about another "I" – the narrator. Both psychology and literary criticism have so far failed to explain how this understanding comes about.

Then, by the time young readers have come to know the metaphoric and metonymic distinctions in what they read, they know what a poem like *Timothy Winters, The Bully Asleep* reflects the human condition, but that *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* also does so in a different way from a novel like *Sounder* or *The Borrowers.* Legends and myths are suddenly real in a less explicable way than they once were, but the question of reality does not arise with *Asterix* and *Tintin.* They also know that princesses in fairy tales are not misrepresentations of female status but symbols of moral worth. In fact, they are less muddled about literary categories at this stage than they are later. When they ask "is it true" they are not looking for absolute values but they are sorting out their notions of "what kinds of things am I handling here".

Most of these things pass unregarded until studies in depth of inexperienced readers (the ones teachers call slow, bad, reluctant) reveal that these literary competences are not present. Very few teachers of twelve-year-olds realise that what the well-read take for granted, the inexperienced still have to meet by reading the kinds of texts that aid and abet these discoveries. For these literary competences are never, actually, *taught.* Yet they are at the heart of the next stage of being a reader. The relationship of art and life is always discussed much later with the young than the point at which the *experience* of discovering the difference is strongest. *The Sword in the Stone*, again, can be a crucial text for this purpose.

Other literary competences present in twelve-year-olds are these. They can relate one incident in a novel to another. If the hero fails in a trial of strength or understanding near the beginning of the story the reader knows that he must face the same danger or test later, often in a more acute form. The understanding of the nature of climax and conclusion is built into this awareness of plot form. Again, my understanding of this came from watching a videotape of an inexperienced yet apparently competent reader discussing *The Magic Finger* with his teacher who could not understand the pupil's failure to anticipate, in the light of an event early in the story, that the heroine's curious power to transform humans into beasts would be used more than once. Twelve-year-olds know that a plot takes time to unfold. They differ from each other, however, in the degree of uncertainty they are prepared to tolerate about a story once they have begun. When we look carefully at what they mean when they say "I just couldn't get into it" we begin to understand what commends a book to them right at the start. A television presentation which sets the scene at a glance can make a novel by Sir Walter Scott instantly approachable. Imagine the puzzlement of an inexperienced reader with his layered text.

At this stage the young can also distinguish the voice on the page in terms of humour, irony, anger and cajoling. They may recognise a narrator who is not so honest as he might be. They share the author's jokes at the

expense of some characters. In a book like *The Borrowers* the practised twelve-year-olds understand that the children in the story are big, stupid, clumsy people – adults, in fact, compared with the tiny Borrowers who are wise, skilful, subtle and witty, like children.

Finally, experienced young readers know that reading links the outer world of events with the equally real inner world of feeling so that events and responses are held in equilibrium, thought about, relfected upon and responded to. Their reading has taught them that literature lets you choose what you read, and you can stop reading if you do not like it. For children, literature does not come packaged as high culture opposed to popular fiction. As Gabriel Josipovici (1976) says: "What the sophisticated reader needs to recognise is what every naive reader instinctively knows, that novels and other symbolic systems are not repertoires of meaning but invitations to take part in certain kinds of activity." When I read this, I remembered Sterne: "no author who understands the first boundaries of decorum and good breeding, would presume to think all: the truest respect which you can pay to the reader's understanding is to halve this matter amicably, and to leave him to imagine, in his turn, as well as yourself", and Sartre: "The combined efforts of author and reader bring into being the concrete and imaginary object which is the work of the mind."

You have to take my word for it that the reading of biographies of those who are willing to share imagining with an author shows them to be readers who early discovered the rules of the game. They did it by listening to stories and having them read to them. Good readers do not know reading as easy or difficult; they scarcely distinguish adults' books from children's books. They see books as good or bad, in the first instance, as what gives, or does not give them pleasure. They divide books into boring or not boring; the boring ones they leave, the others they read to the end. Literature of whatever kind, however they came to it or pursued it, is mainstream activity for those who play the game with the author. The rules are never taught in class but learned by reading what pleases. Good readers read books as if they were writing them.

Equally fascinating is the evidence that comes from twelve-year-olds who learned to read in school by means of lengthy instruction that emphasises correct behaviour in response to print. This is usually phonic sounding and blending. Some children do exactly what they are taught yet never seem to make the text mean something to them. Most poor readers were taught to read at school and because the instruction was bamboozling they rarely discovered any pleasure, any enchantment in stories that encouraged them to read for themselves. Only recently have we begun to offer their explanations of why they think they failed as evidence for their lack of success.

Let me say at once that many an instructed beginner taught to bark at print has later discovered the pleasure and profit of reading to please himself. But I have encountered no failed or inexperienced twelve-year-old who once thought he could read, or had enjoyed it and had become competent and *then* gave it up. Inexperienced or inadequate readers are, by definition, those who have no legacy of past satisfactions *in what they read*. Here is what they do not know about reading.

- They cannot make a story work on a page as they can when they hear one or watch television. They do not fully understand the conventions of print related to narrative, usually because they have little experience of how "once upon a time" becomes "happily ever after".

- There is no fascination for older inexperienced readers in helping the author to *make* the story. They expect instead that something will happen to them when they read without their doing anything.
- They have no sense of suspense. "What happens next?" is not a matter of curiosity.
- They have not derived *literary competences* from such things as rhythm in verse, prosodic by-play, allusion, metaphor – all things that happen to a five-year-old encountering *Mr Gumpy's Outing*.
- Their legacy of past satisfactions is too meagre to give them the impetus to choose a book.
- The words "lost in a story" have no meaning for them.
- They have no patience with a story that does not proclaim itself in the first line and continue as a series of actions.
- They have no idea that reading is something you work at – that they could be authors enjoying the power of producing text to be read by someone other than a teacher.
- Their strongest feeling is that the meaning of a text is sealed into the words to be "decoded" and the teacher has the key, which she lends to those who have behaved well in reading lessons. Above all, they have no route round their boredom. They are not attracted to libraries chiefly because borrowing a book means incurring the social obligation of returning it. They do not know that the book *stays with* the borrower even when the volume is back on the shelf.

Above all the inexperienced reader who does not feel attracted to books, lacks *desire*, a feeling that Barthes says borders on the erotic so that one is willing to forego all the social satisfactions of being with other people for the special satisfaction of being alone with a book in a special kind of closeness.

My point will be made if you concede the fact that no one ever had this kind of desire for a basal reader, but only for *Peter Rabbit* and *The Magic Pudding* and a host of others that you remember as the starting points of your really learning to read. Because all of these things are so obvious, they play very little part in our awareness of expertise. As soon as you had the *desire* to read, you began to acquire literary competences – "How is this book to be read?" – that you then began to take for granted.

Confirmation for this comes from our most recent research. Examination of videotaped lessons shows us how one twelve-year-old, when asked what the characters in the story were *like*, could not cope with the question because he had never before been asked such a thing, so he had no idea that you can discuss characters in a story as people you know. At the same time, his teacher had no idea that there were individuals who did not know this. Further detailed looking (this time with the sound turned off) showed how the teacher's dramatic interpretation of a later incident increased the pupil's participation in the meaning. His teacher was constantly trying to relate what was in the pupil's experience to what he was reading, but until he saw this as a relevant thing to do, the pupil could not make the story incidents meaningful. He was trying to get from the text what the author wanted to call on in him – his experience of feeling.

This grasp of consciousness is not only disembedded thinking (Donaldson: 1979) but a kind of *supercoding*. Our pupil was learning that reading, real reading, includes the consideration of possibilities. The fact that print stays

where it is allows this discovery to take place. Here is Margaret Donaldson (1979):

> Those very features of the written word which encourage awareness of language may also encourage awareness of one's own thinking, or be relevant to the development of intellectual self-control with incalculable consequences for the development of the kinds of thinking which are the characteristics of logic, mathematics and the sciences.

The "features of the written word" are best met early in the writings of those who care about them enough to write for children. So here I make my case for children's literature as mainstream text, not optional extra. Let me clinch the matter by rounding on English teachers.

A series of historical accidents kept secondary school English teachers, and their educators, out of the field of reading studies. We have also been guilty of a massive failure of imagination in continuing to act as if language were the servicing bay of English and literature our especial and rare delight. We have been reluctant, slow or unable to investigate what we, as readers consumed by desire, have experienced in the matter of how books are to be read and what we know about reading. We are a source of concealed evidence. We have concentrated so much on what children have to read, that we have made very few offerings to the study of how they come to know how to do it. I say *come to know*, because, as I have already insisted, no one actually teaches children how to make texts mean.

English teachers are fond of quoting I. A. Richards "Read it as if it made sense" and "we are all of us learning to read all the time". But no one has actually put a *how* into "as if it made sense" or explained how learning to read changes as a process or an activity between eight and eighteen. Arthur Applebee's work is a landmark of lonely splendour. Until the conviction and pedagogy of English teachers is behind the idea that the actual literature which assumes its readers are children is necessary for a production of a literate population, those who are at this moment learning to read may never discover whether their efforts are worthwhile or not. Unless English teachers *will* cry change, we shall always be in the situation in which we find ourselves at this conference where the literature commission is on the other side of a main road and in no visible contact with those who are concerned with the stories children write to please themselves.

Let me suggest how English teachers, who are, by definition, expert readers, could become reading experts in ways not yet deemed relevant, let alone explored. We could:

- Become more aware about reading processes; what we actually *do*. We could discover how a reader operates a set of strategies determined by the nature of the text *and* his reading biography, both extended up to this point, and his purpose in reading at this time. The same text calls out different strategies in each reader even if the purposes are similar. This is where reading tests go wrong.
- Discover what is actually involved for a child of a given age and stage in getting into a story. We make guesses but do not collect evidence.
- Discover what makes a text difficult for a particular child. Readability studies are crude word counts compared with what we need to know.
- Discover how a reader reconstrues a narrative when he reaches the end. What happens when a young reader reads a book again and again?
- Discover how a child recognises "the voice on the page". How does this

become an awareness of the author's viewpoint, the value system displayed in the text?

- Locate a reading experience in the reading autobiography of a pupil, as a class experience, as a development of social awareness. For example, if the effectiveness of irony depends on an assumption of shared values, when does a reader know he is not sharing these values?
- Explore reading attentiveness and boredom. Culler (1975) says critics never talk about boredom. There is a possibility for understanding in so far as boredom is the opposite of desire. We do not really know why and when children stop reading.
- Understand the relationship of early reading archetypes – the stories of legendary heroes like Superman and King Arthur to the forms of later literature. (Did you spot that Graham Greene's *Dr Fischer of Geneva* is a fairy story?)
- Discover how the young make what they read into models of what they write.
- See what happens when a child reads a great deal of one writer's work: E. Blyton, C. S. Lewis, U. Le Guin, Jan Mark, Capt. Johns.

None of this can happen until we understand much more about the developmental nature of children's reading and the ways by which they come to know what is, on the whole, a list of secret things that all accomplished readers know yet never talk about, even when they discuss what they have read. We must make the books that authors write for children the way by which children come to know these things.

Children's literature has to be mainstream classroom text because the writers use conventions they count on for a book to be read in a certain way. Only literature, and not made up texts, teaches what we take for granted, the rules of the game.

Because of their preoccupation with response, (old style, not this conference style) English teachers have neglected the features of their starting point – reading a story as responding to an invitation to take part in a certain kind of activity. The current literature for children, exists as part of the total picture of literature. If offers choice within which children can range as free choosers, to select a book they have never tried, to drop it if they are not ready, to repeat a pleasure by reading another of the same, to explore new forms and kinds, to exchange their culture for another, to match the television version with the tale in the book. But none of this will yield anything unless we listen attentively to what children say about the books they read with *desire*: what they say *after* they have answered the questions we set for them, when they talk to each other when the classroom constraints fall away.

In the official research report on *Children and Their Books* the authors say "The young reader seldom finds it possible to be articulate in any specific way about what he has liked or valued in his reading". That is nonsense. We just do not pay attention to what they are actually saying because, expert readers that we are, we think children have nothing to tell us about how they "get to be expert". If English teachers traded less in literary secrets and watched children actually reading books, then they would know more about the process of reading than the psychologists; be able to make more use of the help of the librarians, and perhaps, come to know about choice; and above all, understand why some children give up reading altogether.

In the matters of literature written for children, from the picture book to Alan Garner, many teachers have hurried by on the other side. Their training in the great works makes them prefer long close reading of *The Heroes* to an abundance of heroism. In so doing they ignore the fact that the route to *Balder Dead* may be through *Superman*, and refuse to see that the culture of childhood becomes childhood as a literary symbol, although evidence is there for the getting.

My plea is very simple, that in the study of reading English teachers should move back to the middle ground and offer for inspection their knowledge and evidence of how children *come to know* how to read and what they want to read. Our greatest impediment is our own unexamined assumptions about what reading actually is.

In *Children's Minds*, Margaret Donaldson is emphatic that the process of becoming literate, with its links with intellectual self-awareness, has worked immense but commonly unsuspected effects on the growth of the mind because reading and writing give children time to pause. She adds something spectacularly simple and wise: from the beginning you can try to help the child towards some degree of understanding the general nature of the learning activity that he is about to engage in, so that, before he gets down to the confusion of detail, he has at least a rudimentary sense of the kind of things he is attempting. In reading this means real books right from the start. She adds, "An adult's knowledge of the general nature of the subjects taught to children when they first enter school is apt to be more established that it blocks the realisation of precisely what the children need to be helped to see".

If we made children's books – real books – mainstream text then watched and listened to what happens, who knows what would become of the study of reading? We might even begin to understand what we are about.

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English Education Research in the 'Eighties

Roy C. O'Donnell
The University of Georgia, USA

Last year Bob Shuman asked me to write a chapter for a book he was editing for the National Education Association. The book was to deal with various educational issues of the decade of the 'eighties, and my assigned topic was "Needed Research in the Teaching of English". In the opening paragraph of that chapter, I disclaimed any ability to see into the future; and after reviewing some of the research done in the 'seventies, I suggested some things that should receive attention in the coming decade.

I still feel no confidence in my ability to predict what kind of research will be done in the next ten years; but having given considerable thought to the matter, I am willing to make a few broad guesses. As background for those guesses, I should like to report a survey of some of the research published during the past decade and comment briefly on some things I think worthy of the attention of researchers in the immediate future.

When the tenth volume of *Research in the Teaching of English* was completed in 1976, I began a survey of the articles published up to that time. In preparation for writing this paper, I recently completed an additional survey of volumes 11 through 13 so that I could have an overview of all the articles published in that journal prior to 1980. I wish now to summarise briefly the results of those surveys.

In the first ten volumes of RTE there are 176 articles, excluding bibliographies, announcements, and letters to the editor. Although these articles are by no means all of the published research related to the concerns of teachers of English, I believe they provide an interesting and informative profile of the research activity during that period. Most of the studies were done in the United States, but some studies done in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand are included.

The topics dealt with were categorised in two ways, one according to the different sub-topics of English and language arts, and the other according to various pedagogical concerns. The first set of categories consists of language, literature, composition, drama, non-print media, reading, and a miscellaneous category. The second set includes curriculum, teaching methods, evaluation methods, research methods, learner characteristics, and another miscellaneous category. I recognise the arbitrariness of this arrangement, but it still seems to be a feasible way to treat the data under consideration.

My tabulation showed that studies related to composition (29 per cent) were more numerous than those related to any other topic. Studies related to language ranked second (24 per cent). I should point out the arbitrary distinction between these two categories, since some studies gave almost equal emphasis to linguistic and rhetorical concerns. Studies related to literature ranked third (15 per cent). There was only one study related to

drama and only one related to non-print media. The supplementary survey for 1977-1979 showed an increase in studies related to language (44 per cent), with the percentage of composition studies remaining constant, and the percentage of literature studies dropping slightly (13 per cent). There were no additional studies related to drama and only one related to non-print media. The proportion of studies related to reading declined in the latter three years (from 12 per cent to 5 per cent). It is interesting that the emphasis placed on drama and non-print media in much of the literature related to English teaching is not reflected in the articles published in NCTE's research journal.

In the pedagogical categories, studies dealing with learner characteristics were most numerous (39 per cent). Teaching method accounted for the second largest number of studies (14 per cent). Curriculum studies ranked third (12.5 per cent), and studies related to evaluation method and research were least numerous (9 per cent of each category). In the supplementary survey, studies classified under learner characteristics showed an increase (50 per cent), as did those classified under curriculum (19 per cent). The percentage of studies related to evaluation method stayed the same, while the percentages related to research method and teaching method dropped (6 per cent each).

Again, there appears to be a mismatch between the concerns of a large segment of the English teaching profession and the research studies that have found their way into print. Despite the concern over accountability and testing, studies related to evaluation were not numerous, and their proportion declined in the latter part of the decade.

Nearly one-third (30 percent) of the studies in the first ten volumes involved the secondary grades. Elementary grades and college level received almost equal attention (18 per cent and 17 per cent respectively). The preschool level ranked last (3 per cent). In the supplementary survey, the elementary grades ranked first (27 per cent) and college ranked a close second (26 per cent). Attention to the secondary grades declined (23 per cent), and the preschool level received more attention (6 per cent) but still ranked last. There were, of course, several articles that could not be classified according to grade level and some that dealt with more than one grade level.

The category headings used to classify articles according to research design include analytical comparison, case studies, correlational, other descriptive, historical, quasi-experimental, true experimental, and review-commentary. Analytical comparison studies were most numerous (25 per cent) in the first ten volumes, but not in the latter three (20 per cent). Quasi-experimental studies were more numerous (14 per cent) than true experimental studies (3 per cent) but there was an increase in the proportion of true experimental studies in the latter three volumes (7 per cent). Case studies and correlational studies were not numerous (3 per cent each), and their relative standings changed only slightly in the supplementary survey. The percentage of review-commentary articles was about the same in both surveys (22 per cent and 23 per cent). There were only two historical studies.

Most of the articles (71 per cent) were written by a single author, and the overwhelming majority (87 per cent) involved an author who was affiliated with a college or university. Only a few studies were reported by persons affiliated with schools or school districts.

I have not done a detailed survey of the studies reported at American Educational Research Association meetings in recent years, but it is my impression that until recently only a small percentage of those studies were related to the specific concerns of English teachers. Out of more than 750 program sessions at the 1980 AERA meeting, only thirty-seven (less than 5 per cent) dealt with various aspects of language, writing, and discourse analysis and comprehension.

A more comprehensive survey, including ERIC materials, books, and other journals, particularly those published outside the United States, would be useful, but I doubt that the total profile would differ much from that reflected in the pages of RTE. It is probably true that throughout the decade of the 'seventies more research effort was directed toward language and composition than was directed toward literature, and more toward reading than non-print media. Also, it is probably true that most of the research was done by college and university professors and graduate students; it is ulikely that a significant proportion of research was done by persons in the role of elementary or secondary teacher.

It is my opinion that the profile drawn from the survey of RTE articles provides a useful background for projections of the kind of research we need to do in the 'eighties. Although the amount of research in a given area has no necessary relation to how much more research is needed, it is worthwhile to note certain areas that have received limited attention.

Although we have heard a great deal about the educational value of dramatic activities and non-print media, there is little research to document their value and almost none on how they can best be utilised in English classrooms. More research in these areas is needed and should be done in the immediate future. As I pointed out in the chapter referred to earlier:

> There is a similar lack of proportion between the amount of commentary on the need to go back to "basics" and the amount of research designed to define what is basic and to find the most effective ways to teach basic knowledge and skills. Likewise, the massive amount of material that has been written about accountability in the use of educational resources has not been accompanied by good research on various methods of evaluating instruction in English and the validity and reliability of the evaluation instruments in use.

The two historical studies published in RTE are not the only historical studies done in the past decade (Arthur Applebee's *Tradition and Reform in the Teaching of English* was published by NCTE in 1974), but we should give more attention to the history of various aspects of English in the schools. If we knew more about the efforts of our predecessors we might avoid needless repetition of some of their errors.

It seems likely that in the coming decade, research related to written composition will continue to receive a great deal of attention. a recent study, *"Needed Research in the Teaching of Writing"* by Bossone and Larson (Center for Advanced Study in Education, City University of New York, 1980), reports responses to a questionnaire of 219 instructors of writing. Some of the objectives of the study were to report what respondents believed to be major writing problems of students, to identify research questions or problems of importance to instructors of writing, and to make recommendations regarding needed research in the teaching of writing.

Problems mentioned most frequently by respondents were students' inability to develop ideas and inability to organise. Those mentioned least

frequently were inadequacies in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. In response to questions regarding background factors influencing writing, a majority of respondents called attention to the importance of cultural background and cognitive style of the learner. In response to questions about developmental factors influencing writing, respondents gave priority to processes students follow in analysing, evaluating, and revising their own writing. The most important question concerning instructional factors influencing writing was: "Which instructional procedures contribute most directly to improving a student's writing efforts at different grade levels?"

In their interpretive comments Bossone and Larson recommend that researchers:

> . . . continue to give attention, through case studies and observation as well as experimental procedures, to locating connections between reading and writing, to the ways in which human beings develop their power to process language, to the cognitive operations that affect writers' ability to conceptualize ideas, and indeed to all of the problems that are related to ways in which writers learn to compose (p. 37).

Bossone and Larson suggest that researchers should give more attention to ways in which interaction between teacher and students and among students themselves influences learning. The call on researchers to assist in the discovery of more effective models for instruction in writing than those currently in use. They also remind us that the fruits of research can affect the practice of teachers only if the teachers know about them, and they call for more efficient means of disseminating the results of research.

I believe researchers interested in problems related to the teaching and learning of written language skills should give attention to Bossone and Larson's study. I think the problems they cite deserve and will receive our attention in the immediate future.

It is obvious that the recommendations Bossone and Larson make need not be limited to research in writing. Researchers in language and language development should focus their attention on cognitive operations and psycholinguistic processes, as indeed many of them already are doing. During the past two decades we have acquired a great deal of knowledge about the structure of language and the characteristics of children's language at various stages of development. This knowledge is valuable, but it has not been as useful in classroom settings as some of us had hoped it would be. We still hear discussions and debates about the efficacy of teaching grammar and the instructional value of one kind of grammar in comparison to another. As one who has done research on the syntactic structure of children's language and the developmental stages children go through in their progress towards linguistic maturity, as well as research on the relationship between knowledge of grammar and skill in reading and writing, I welcome the prospect of more research concentrated on the cognitive operations and psycholinguistic processes, as well as the socio-linguistic factors, related to the use of language. Such research should expand our knowledge of how children acquire language and help us to encourage and guide their growth toward the mastery of spoken as well as written language. It will not enable us to solve all of our instructional problems, but it should help us to deal more effectively with them.

Recent advances beyond research focused on the syntactic structure of sentences to the structure of larger units of discourse have been gratifying to many of us. It is my hope that we will make further gains in our

knowledge about the structure of discourse and at the same time learn more about the cognitive and semantic structures that underlie units of discourse larger than the sentence.

Until a few years ago, much of the research related to the teaching of literature was limited to the reading interests of boys and girls. The development of ways of classifying readers' responses to literature opened up new possibilities for research in this area. There have been several valuable studies completed in the past twenty years, but as I have already pointed out, the number of research studies related to literature has been relatively small. Although I have no basis for a confident prediction concerning research developments in this area, I expect a continuing increase in both the quantity and quality of studies related to the teaching of literature.

Visual literacy and non-print media have gained some acceptance as part of the language arts curriculum, but they have received less attention from researchers than they deserve. How to give them proper emphasis without seeming to neglect the so-called "basics" presents problems that should engage the interest of teachers and researchers in the decade of the 'eighties.

Problems of teaching English to gifted and handicapped students are widely recognised. To the extent that research can assist in bringing to full realisation the linguistic abilities of exceptional students, it deserves the careful attention of researchers in English education.

English as a second language has received less attention in the United States than it has elsewhere, but the growing population of those whose native language is not English makes research in this area a necessity. Similarities between problems of ESL students and those learning "standard" English as a second dialect have been widely recognised, but research is needed to help us understand the differences as well as the similarities and to develop effective instructional methods and materials for students in these categories.

There has always been a dearth of research concentrated on the training of English teachers as distinguished from the training of teachers in general. English teachers face special problems in the classroom, and to the extent that their problems are unique, we need research designed to deal with these peculiar problems. More research is needed to identify what is unique to the teaching of English and ways to deal with this uniqueness in teacher education programs.

While it is true that we need and probably will have more research in the areas I have cited, we also need some basic changes in the way research is commonly done. My survey of journal articles showed that most of the research reported was conducted by college and university professors and their graduate students. It is probably also true that most of the readers of the reports were other professors and graduate students. As a consequence, the impact of research findings is likely to be indirect and delayed. Not only do we need more effective means of disseminating research findings, but we need to get more classroom teachers involved in planning and conducting research. It seems obvious that research would be more meaningful to them if they were more involved in it. With the increasing number of teachers who hold graduate degrees, there should be more research initiated and carried out by teachers in their own schools. In addition, there is rich potential for cooperative efforts of classroom teachers, graduate

students, and university professors. Research projects dealing with local concerns of teachers could be a valuable part of in-service teacher education programs.

The limitations of experimental research in education modelled on designs invented by agricultural researchers have been widely recognised, but it is only recently that many researchers in English education have been willing to accept alternative models. Research techniques developed by anthropologists are now being tried with gratifying results. In reaction to the constraints imposed by traditional designs, some researchers may be tempted to go too far in the opposite direction, but alternative designs have possibilities which should, and no doubt will, be explored in the years ahead.

At the same time we are broadening the scope of involvement and expanding our repertoire of research techniques, we must continue to improve the quality of research related to the teaching of English. The research done by doctoral candidates to satisfy degree requirements has to be limited to problems that can be dealt with in a reasonable period of time without excessive expenditure of funds. While many of these studies are of high quality, practical considerations sometimes necessitate compromise. At the opposite extreme, professional researchers are not always close enough to the problems and concerns of English teachers to do the kind of research that is most needed. Cooperative efforts of scholars who have mastered their discipline and the techniques of research design and data analysis, and classroom teachers who understand the purposes and methods of meaningful research are needed. Such cooperative efforts, with adequate support from funding agencies, can help us find workable solutions to some of the educational problems that continue to confront us. It is my hope and expectation that research in English education will develop in that direction in the decade of the 'eighties.

THE ENGLISH TEACHER, RESEARCH AND CHANGE (1966–1980)

Garth Boomer
Wattle Park Teachers' Centre, South Australia

Before trying to isolate significant influences on the English teacher in the past fifteen years and to assess the impact of research on classroom practice, I shall briefly sketch the network of constraints and pressures which surround the individual teacher. Figure 1, "The Cosmic Egg of English Teaching", is an attempt to represent the forces and counterforces which act upon the teacher of English. It also attempts to assess the strength of the various forces.

In this paper, I wish to use the analogy of ecology to indicate the subtle interaction and interdependence of the system within which teachers work. I therefore find notions such as "autonomy", "conformity" and "independence" inappropriate for my analysis. The English teacher is pictured within, not necessarily *trapped* within, a web of tensions. Some of these seem to me to have a higher valency than others in terms of their power to shape what happens in schools.

The umbrella of western/national/state politics and "ruling" ideology along with economic (therefore technological and social) structure is in my view the chief determiner of the "force field" or "egg shell" within which English teaching is contained. In harmony or tension with this "macro" umbrella, I see an equally significant "micro control" coming from the individual's "political/ethical profile". The individual's belief system having been socially constructed is likely to be in basic sympathy with the "macro control" but, depending on the subtle combination of all the other factors in an individual's life, it may be in tension with this macro control at various levels and in various ways.

Many of the values and beliefs embedded in the macro structure are implicit and tend to be reproduced unobtrusively from era to era, decade to decade as part of the "hidden curriculum" of culture.

A sub-set of these all-embracing "habits", is the set of reproductions which accompany the continuing generations of teachers, more specifically English teachers. These tend to be indistinguishable from the general myths which lay-members of society perpetuate about teachers and teaching because the significant "stories" are enacted as models for them during their stay at school. Many of these myths are well and truly institutionalised and "reified" in public examinations, which represent established values, standards, and views of "worthwhileness", and in textbooks, commercially or institutionally produced, which enshrine various contents and pedagogies. I see these influences as second order forces.

If these are seen as essentially conservative influences, then in possible tension with them I would see the solutions continually being generated at the level of praxis. Each moment of the life of classrooms is likely to pose a problem requiring a creative solution. Teachers deal with these problems

FIGURE 1: The Cosmic Egg of English Teaching
(Garth Boomer, 1980)

(• indicates possible strength of influence)

by calling on their personal and professional resources, usually in tension or collaboration with their students. Slightly less immediately they may seek out help directly or indirectly from their teaching colleagues. The accumulated effect of solutions generated at the level of praxis may be to create a teacher consciousness which conflicts with aspects of the institutionalised pedagogies.

I therefore rate the influence of students and colleagues as "second order" variables along with textbooks and examinations.

At a third order level I have rated the influence of a teacher's professional training (pre-service or in-service), of the system (through curriculum guides, advisers and conferences), of new theories and research, of the

community (employers, pressure groups, parents) and of "superiors" in education (faculty heads, principals, inspectors, etc.)

There is plenty of room for debate about the relative significance of the factors which I have isolated. There are also, no doubt, other factors which teachers themselves would rate as significant. My assessment is largely subjective but I can call upon some aspects of my own research and the research of others to support the relatively low status which I ascribe to research and advisory work. This is not an argument for the discontinuation of research. My conception of research is that it is a crucial component in the various conversations of teachers, and of society, aspects of which conversations will eventually become part of the established mythos and thereby exert considerable influence indirectly on the course of education.

Having established my "ecological" map of the English teacher in context, I have a means of reading the past fifteen years of English teaching. My analysis will not yield the truth but it may help this commission towards a more subtle understanding of our history and our likely futures.

I shall proceed by writing notes on some of the factors I have isolated before dwelling more fully on research and change.

Western/National/State Politics and Ideology

I would contend that although we get some changes in direction and emphasis in education according to which political party is in power, the overall effect of party political change is fairly cosmetic, at least in Australia where politics tends to be prefigured by western philosophy, the economics of the USA and the desires of multi-national pressure groups. Certain shared values tend to prevail across political parties – a roughly Christian ethic, the belief in parliamentary democracy, the rights of "free" speech, etc. When a Liberal government holds sway in Australia we see the metaphors of commerce, individual enterprise, competition and choice creeping into education. With a Labour government there comes an emphasis on egalitarianism, social welfare and worker participation, but economic constraints do not usually allow great advances.

Such overriding western ideals as technological "progress", profit and productivity, efficient use of time and resource, reward for effort, pride in achievement, obedience, loyalty, rationality and justice as defined by the employers rather than the employed, permeate education. Those teachers who march to the beat of a radically different drummer are either subtly contained or openly repressed.

Because the ruling ideologies have changed little in the past fifty years, it is difficult to see much change in the ideals which are either explicitly or implicitly upheld in schools but there have been some interesting changes in mood which seem to have an economic and party political base.

I would characterise the period 1966-1970 in Australian English teaching as a breaking free from the hardened boundaries of English in terms of content and style. There was a grass-roots reaction against the imperialist policies which led to the idiocy of Vietnam. A new idealism and belief in the individual's capacity for growth arose as an antidote to the inhuman atrocities of the war. Eventually, in Australia, this led to a change of Government.

English teaching reflected this questioning of society. The thematic approach, the moves towards exploiting literature to illuminate current social issues, the proliferation of courses offering choice, the undermining

of public examination restrictions, all fitted the English teacher's growing disillusionment with the old order. The cheerful economic situation meant that the "back to basics" push was fairly feeble. Money for education was beginning to flow. Advisers were unheard of in 1966. By 1970 all states in Australia were beginning to develop advisory networks. Creative techniques were invented to provide multiple sets of books, thereby breaking the stranglehold of the "set" course. It was a time of liberalism.

Looking back, I think it was a time when the house of English was redecorated and a few additions were built on. Despite the appearance of change there were, however, no fundamental structural changes. The architects and home owners just became a little more flamboyant and daring. New gadgets and new ways of doing things evolved. Open space classrooms, individualised work-sheets, cartoon-packed text books, electives and excursions came into their own. Alternative courses also took hold. "Catering for individual differences" was a popular slogan.

From 1970-74, money flowed even more generously. Innovation was economically supported as soon as the Labour Government took power, almost as if it were a good thing in itself. Schools (and English teachers) were encouraged, almost bullied into inviting community participation in education. The National Committee on the Teaching of English was established, along with a number of other national committees, to do some future gazing and to recommend on the needs of the profession. After the "flush" of breaking free, there was, at least at the "conference going" level, a desire for knowledge, research, a sound conceptual base.

As Whitlam changed our national stance on foreign policy, English teachers also began to look outside. Visitors from America and England to various conferences helped to create the belief that there could be some international policies on English teaching.

Since 1975 a good number of fires have been put out or voluntarily have died. A change of government; a down-turn in the economy; unemployment; and we find ourselves in the present state of fear and guilt. We are being urged to go back to conserve, to play safe, to tighten up, to cut down and to take control at the very time when we are beginning to understand our craft better; indeed, at a time of national ferment about language in education. We fear and doubt the things we almost did during the outbreak. We are guilty because we half-believe the myths that children cannot get jobs because of their spelling.

Language One is a political document, beautifully symbolising that the ruling ideologies of law and order have been re-asserted after some minor aberrations. (Sadler, R. K., Hayllar, T.A.S., Powell, C. J. – Macmillan, Melbourne).

Professional Habits and Societal Myths

Perhaps the best way to represent some of the tensions between professional habit and exploration in the last fifteen years is to pose some of the polarities.

Habit	*Possibility*
Using only acknowledged, "good" literature.	Using any literature including "pop" literature which will "connect".

Never giving full marks.	Giving no grading at all and simply responding.
Correcting every error.	Replacing teacher correction by student editing.
Using comprehension texts and language exercise books to teach "grammar".	Using no exercise books and working on actual scripts.
Seeing poems, plays and novels as the core of English.	Re-conceiving English as language study and development.
Getting students to write essays about writing.	Encouraging students to be authors in their own right.
Streaming classes according to ability.	Not streaming at all.
Teacher programming the work for students.	Students and teachers programming together.
Habit	*Possibility*
Keeping the identity of English secure.	Discovering new ways of dividing knowledge, example Humanities; Integrated Studies, etc.
Speaking and writing correctly at all times.	Developing flexibility in language codes and registers, replacing correctess with the notion of appropriateness.
Running a quiet orderly classroom.	Allowing for group discussion, debate and interchange.

Teachers in defining themselves within some of these polarities are forced to take account of "societal myths" about English teaching and learning. Here are a few of which I am strongly aware:

- Learning language is like building a house. You need a good basic foundation and then gradually brick by brick you can build the walls. Eventually it will be a good place to live in. (How can you write a sentence until you know how to build up all the parts?)
- Children learn by practice (drill) and imitation with reward for correctness and penalty for error. (If their spelling is not corrected they will develop bad habits – bad spelling today; heroin tomorrow.)
- English teachers should help children to speak properly and correctly and to write properly and correctly so that they can get a good job ("a better job than we parents had").
- English teachers should put good books in front of children, not books which deal with controversial social, sexual and religious issues.
- To pass English you have to know your facts and quotations and be able to write in sentences.
- Bad speech is a sign of slovenliness and bad citizenship.

It is, of course, dangerous to imply that all members of the community lean strongly towards these myths. My experience is that people are more than ready to alter their myths if the professionals convince them that they are wrong or misleading. Teachers, however, seem more than ready to cite

societal myths for their own purpose. ("We'd like to do it, but the parents wouldn't like it.")

I am presently depressed because so many of my colleagues seem to be knuckling under to the perceived myths of society. We could, I believe, with effectiveness:

". . . take arms against a sea of troubles
. . . And by opposing end them."

Publishers

The year 1966 was the beginning of the end of centrally prescribed texts for English at the secondary level. Few were bold enough to suggest total school-based curriculum then but there was a strong groundswell of discontent with the pre-emptive central course, soon to be followed by rebellion even at prescription by the faculty head. Ironically, it seems that as the centre relinquished its hold on the content and spirit of English courses, the publishers moved in to provide the crutch, or the manacles, for the unskilled, the uncertain and the lazy.

The course book or various euphemisms for it ("source books"; collections; explorations) have always been a part of mainstream English teaching. It would be most interesting to test the relative influence of ruling ideology and research on the contents. My personal view is that there has been a clearly observable dialectic of textboks in which the "habit" books have done battle with the new wave (and research oriented) texts. A brief examination of texts which have attempted to hold the middle ground over the past fifteen years gives some indication of the dialectics.

1966:	*English in Australian Schools*	— Ridout and McGregor
	Using Better English	— Allsopp and Hunt
1968:	*Reflections**	— Clements, Dixon, Stratta
	*Themes and Responses**	— Delves and Tickell
	*Voices**	— Summerfield
1970:	*Sandals in One Hand**	— Boomer and Hood
	Personal English Programme	— Rousch
	*Patchwork**	— Carozzi
1972:	*Connexions**	— Penguin Series
	*The Bad Deeds Gang**	— Hannan and Tickell
	*Language in Use**	— Doughty et al
	English Today	— Alsopp, Hunt et al
1974:	*Mastering Words* (revival)	— R. D. Walshe
	Catalyst	— Esta de Fossard
	Your Move	— Neil Fuller
1976:	*Smile On The Face of The Tiger*	— Sadler, Hayller, Powell
	*English for Life**	— Davis and Spicer
	Roll Over Shakespeare	— Hayller, Powell, Sadler
1978	*Language and Communications**	— Forsyth and Wood
-80:	*Language 1*	— Sadler, Hayller, Powell
	*Inform**	— Howard

The asterisk indicates books which I consider to be attempts to take account of certain emerging theories. *Reflections*, for instance, owes much to the work and thinking which inspired the Dartmouth conference. *Patchwork* attempted to bring Holbrook's work on literature and new insights into the

reading process together in a textbook for the less able. *Connexions* was pushing the boundaries of English towards sociology in the name of relevance. *Language in Use* grew out of the work of Halliday and his team and is therefore directly related to a branch of linguistics. *English for Life* attempts to apply aspects of socio-linguistics, and is related in this attempt to *Language and Communication.* Counterpoised against these are the habitual exercise type books, variously dressed, or the "bob-each-way" books which go for the safe ground.

Clearly in 1980 the *Language I, II, III, IV* series is top of the popularity poll, registering a dismal "base" in the litmus test of English teachers.

Not so clearly indicated on my list is the larger battle between language and literature for the central ground, the "core" of English. Many of those opposed to course books and disillusioned after the surfeit of source books are spending their money on "primary sources", novels, poetry, plays. This tendency might be seen as a parallel "back to the basics" move by the literature push. Conversely, it might be seen as a radical and informed move by those who see all textbooks as patronising of teacher's heads and essentially toxic in effect.

Research and The English Teacher

I have spent much of the past five years talking with secondary English teachers who were seeking promotion to the position of faculty head. It is one of my aims in these conversations to assess the extent to which the teacher has read significant new works relevant to English teaching. I also seek to engage the teacher in professional debate about current political and theoretical issues in English teaching. Given that these are teachers of some years' experience who are considered to be competent in their craft, it seems reasonable for one to generalise cautiously about English teaching and research on the basis of these interviews (approximately 150 in number). These are my findings:

- It is rare for a teacher to be able to engage in detailed debate about the significance of advances in our understanding of language learning.
- Teachers may have heard of Britton, Barnes, Moffett and Halliday but few have read them (apart from the odd quotations). Fewer still have the ability to discuss in detail the implications of the work of these people for English teaching.
- While many have been exposed to language theory in their pre-service education, it seems that most have not retained what they did in such a way that it can inform and shape their classroom practice. Attempts to revive memories usually result in vague references.
- When challenged to become engaged in consideration of theories and research, most teachers will unashamedly, some aggressively, say that they are essentially practitioners and question the usefulness of the theorists.
- Teachers are able to talk reasonably fluently on topics and slogans which have currency (Language Across The Curriculum; "Remedial" Reading; Streaming; Course Books; "Back to Basics"). Their talk is informed by praxis and discussion with colleagues rather than by reading or attendance at courses.
- Central curriculum guides are not well known in most schools. They may have been read superficially but they do not provide a continuing reference point.
- There are outstanding examples of teachers with a well-articulated

personal theory of English teaching, but, by and large, teachers are operating, effectively or not, on implicit notions.

These findings do not necessarily mean that I see English teachers negatively. My personal view is that English teachers will not be liberated and capable of finding cracks in their cosmic egg until they have developed a personally articulated set of principles and theories to justify, explain and inform what they do. This can happen without any reference to outside theorists. Some of the best teachers I know have got their act together by tenaciously examining their own practice and reflecting upon it without the aid of advisers, theorists and philosophers. On the other hand, I think even these teachers would benefit from the challenge of engaging with minds which bring a new perspective to the craft.

My findings do not lead to the conclusion that researchers and theorists have little effect on English teaching. Researchers are part of the ecological system and therefore everything they do must change the balance in some way. From my evidence, however, I do not see many direct relationships between researchers and teachers. More diffusely, indirectly and mysteriously the work of the theorists must have its effect on teachers and conversely the work of teachers must similarly contribute to the shaping of research. Perhaps the main task of this commission is to speculate on ways of bringing teachers and researchers into more direct partnership.

I have said that the theorists must affect English teaching. A brief analysis of the last fifteen years may help to justify my confidence. My comments on the textbook industry suggest one way in which theory comes to have a considerable influence on practice. But there seems to be a more subtle and probably more powerful dissemination process at work.

Perhaps I can explain it best by comparing researchers and theorists with story tellers. How do some yarns eventually become part of the mythos of a culture? How do stories spread? Why do some stories die?

The way I see the last fifteen years is that, as a profession, English teachers in varying degrees and sometimes in partisan factions have come under the spell of certain powerful weavers of tales. It is not the details of the research, the ins and outs of the plot, which remain with teachers; it is the ruling metaphors or frames of mind, the ideas, which have somehow caught their imagination and inspired them to be better teachers than they are. The story tellers are, of course, not just theorists and researchers. Politicians, principals, religious leaders, playwrights and teachers themselves can all claim the conch shell if their story is generative or compelling enough.

What catches fire, depends on the present state of the "eco" system of ideas and practice. It also depends on the ethical/political profile, the established frame of mind of those who listen to the story. Theory does not catch on because it is true but rather because it vibrates positively and sympathetically with the growing intuitions and beliefs of the teacher. Research which threatens the deep-seated personal constructs of a teacher will be rejected or not heard.

My hypothesis, then, is that the most influential figures in English teaching in the realm we have designated as "research and theory", are the metaphor makers. Let me name my team of top metaphor makers in the past fifteen years of English teaching. Noam Chomsky (the metaphor of the language generator); Lem Semenovich Vygotsky (the metaphor of dialetical language and thought); Susanne Langer (the metaphor of mind as symbol

maker); George Mead (the metaphor of the social construction of reality); Michael Halliday (the metaphors of meaning potential and language as a tool); Jerome Bruner (the metaphor of language as amplifier of mind); Basil Bernstein (the metaphors of boundary and control). These people tell stories in their own right but most have come to influence English teachers through superb intermediaries, story tellers like James Britton, Frank Smith, Kenneth Goodman, John Dixon, David Holbrook, Harold Rosen, James Moffett, Lawrence Stenhouse, and Douglas Barnes to name some of the word-spinners who have set my mind afire. These tend to be wise generalists who can translate for teachers. Some of these metaphor makers and story tellers are also map makers offering to English teachers ways of analysing the territory of English teaching. Some of the most influential maps in the past fifteen years have come from Britton, Barnes, Moffett, Halliday and Tough.

Then there are some story tellers themselves and some technicians who go on to invent tools for teachers which are a kind of do-it-yourself kit. Used well, these tools lead teachers to re-construe both their theory and their practice because of what the tool leads them to see. Striking examples are the Miscue Inventory which arose out of the Goodmans' work, the Barnes/Schemilt technique of analysing teaching style; *Breakthrough to Literacy* and *Language in Use*, the "tools" which accompanied Halliday's work and anthologies such as *Voices*, by Geoffrey Summerfield, which exemplified a new understanding of the relationship between poetry and culture.

People like Harold Rosen, Nancy Martin and Lawrence Stenhouse have captured imaginations with their vision of teachers as story tellers. One of the most exciting advances of the past ten years has been the growth in "action-research" – teachers recording, documenting and reflecting on the life of their own classrooms. Slowly and significantly this will change the balance of story-telling power. Metaphors are being exchanged and evaluated:

> "It's a fine metaphor Professor Bernstein but it doesn't fit my classroom as neatly as you seem to suggest."

Maybe I am too close to this work, because of my specialist involvement, and this may lead me to be unduly optimistic about the new growth of teacher power. It is certainly a nice dream.

I am daunted but not depressed by the enormity of trying to put some tabs on the last fifteen years. It is good for me to try to tell the story. If I delude myself that there has been a discernible, if slow, march of mind, that there has been a lift in consciousness, then I must plead that I need thus to delude myself in order to stay with the cause.

In order to convince myself that we have "come a long way", I have isolated four areas in which, for the better, I think English teaching will never be the same again. Whether they know the sources of the stories or not, teachers owe a debt to some seminal thinkers and researchers.

Area 1. Language and Learning

The notion of language as resource for personal growth, popularised by John Dixon in *Growth Through English*, is bound up with a conception of the way the human mind works. George Kelly inspired James Britton with his conception of the human being as born scientist hypothesising about the world and acting on these hypotheses. Chomsky, discredited as he may be on some scores, revolutionised our understanding of how language is

acquired. The mind induces deep principles and generates infinite patterns. Vygotsky with a similar conception of mind, helped us to see the links between language and thinking. Bruner and the cognitivist psychologists are pushing this work further each year, all the time clarifying the role of the various media of symbolic representation in human learning.

If people like Kelly, Chomsky, Vygotsky, and Bruner and the metaphor makers in this realm, Frank Smith, Kenneth Goodman, James Britton, James Moffett, John Dixon and Douglas Barnes have been the popular story-tellers. Roger Brown, Courtney Cazden, Carol Chomsky, Gordon Wells and many others have also contributed lovely stories about language development which confirm the overriding conception of the scientific mind.

At the level of the English classroom these stories have been realised in changed pedagogy. Directly or indirectly through the work of people such as Britton and Barnes, enlightened English teachers are providing more time and opportunity for student talk and interim formulation of thought in writing. So-called discovery or research methods relate to language and learning theories. Rather than telling or giving the rules, many more teachers in 1980, compared with 1966, are challenging students to solve their own problems, individually or in collaboration with their colleagues; and to discover underlying principles.

Of course, there have been some counter-productive misconceptions and misapplications of these theories. A loose understanding of "learning through language" has sometimes led to over-indulgent languishing in the *process* with no worthwhile territory to explore and no mind-expanding problem to solve.

Area 2. Fiction and Culture

This is an area where I am a little less sure about the effects on classroom practice. I am also a little less sure where the original metaphors have been forged. I am sure, however, that just as a clearer conception of language is emerging so there is an emerging new picture of literature as a fundamental human activity. The very metaphor of storying which informs this paper is an indication of what I mean. The anthropologists and people like Susanne Langer have helped us to break the narrow bonds of Literature defined with a capital L. Whenever human beings begin to construct an image of life, a fiction, then they are using the "literary" function of language.

Just as archaeology can help us to read a culture through its artefacts, so the unearthing of a culture's literature, not just its "museum" pieces, can help us to re-construct the texture of daily life. Leavis's view of literature and culture was a forerunner to new theories of literature and society but it lacked the generosity of including all literature. Raymond Williams and the Marxist literary critics such as Goldmann and Lukacs have helped us re-construe the extent and role of literature. Williams, in particular, has reminded us of the huge reservoir of working class literature which has previously been excluded from histories of literature and, of course, from classrooms.

And so, people like Harold Rosen and Raymond Williams have encouraged us to extend the range of literature read and made in classrooms. Rosen and networks of Inner London teachers have reminded us of the multicultural mix of classrooms and the need therefore to have an inclusive rather than exclusive view of literature.

At its best this influence on English teaching has led to less precious teaching of literature, more vigorous making of literature and more intensive mining of literature to unearth cultural and political meaning as well as plot.

Area 3. Function and Form

During the 'seventies in Australia, particularly since the arrival of Michael Halliday to our shores there has been an increasingly loud call to English teachers to take language, both in form and function, seriously. It is not just a resource, it is a rule-governed symbol system. Halliday, perhaps more than any other story teller, forces us to see language as part of a total "context of situation". He pictures human beings learning language in social interaction within the context of culture. The power of his conception of language, compared with that of other linguists, is the concerned emphasis on meaning. Taken from its context of situation and studied clinically, language is meaningless.

Halliday, with James Britton, is obviously a rare teacher as well as being a world authority on language. Teachers who study with him emerge taking language seriously and with strategies for translating the theory into the practice of English teaching.

It is a pity that many people see Halliday's view as opposed to that of Britton. Certainly Halliday reminds us, in contrast to Britton's emphasis on language as resource, of the importance of teaching *about* language, but his overarching metaphors are not sharply in conflict with Britton's.

At the classroom level, Halliday's work is being realised in approaches to language which emphasise study of all the functions of language not just literature, and study of the language in *use* not as an isolated exercise.

Perhaps the most exciting results of Halliday's influence can be seen in those classrooms where children are becoming their own researchers into the language of the community and the classroom. Study of the language, in this way, inevitably leads children to consider the appropriateness of language to situation, the falsity of the notions of correctness, and the effect of relative status of participants on language exchange.

In this way, children are being given power through understanding how meanings are framed and exchanged in society.

Area 4. Class and Control

While Bernstein has been discredited or misunderstood, depending on your point of view, with respect to the early work on restricted and elaborated codes, there is no doubt that he has been one of our most exciting and influential metaphor makers. Directly or indirectly he has led English teachers in Australia to look closely at the way in which language is used to control, to exclude and to sort. He has forced us to consider the "middle classness" of schools and the effect which this has on the language and learning of those who have learnt alternative values and styles of meaning exchange. The term "hidden curriculum" takes on new meaning when examined in the light of Bernstein's work on the framing of knowledge. The very way we divide and package knowledge becomes a powerful weapon of control and imperialism in the realm of values.

My own work on "negotiating the curriculum" is directly related to Bernstein's writing about the differential effects of explicit as opposed to implicit control. Control and styles of using power have always been pre-

occupations of English teachers but Bernstein has helped to clarify the issues and to discredit the once popular view of the under-achieving child as deficient language user (as opposed to the view of the school as inadequate language environment).

English teachers through the work of Bernstein, and others such as Rosen, Shuy, and Halliday, are now more aware of the cultural bigotry of traditional schooling and the more enlightened are painfully working away at their ingrained linguistic and cultural prejudices.

The problem which Bernstein poses to English teachers is how to give children access to power. In order to teach this they must be able to demonstrate that they themselves know some of the secrets of access to power. They must be able to demonstrate their own ability to struggle and to question.

This brings me to a point where it is appropriate to stop. Teachers who are their own researchers will not be cowed by acknowledged theorists. They will tenaciously require those who talk profoundly or obscurely to yield their secrets. Once yielded, these secrets will be tested in practice. Your commission has the challenge of investigating ways in which teachers can have greater access to power. This will involve exploration of present blockages, impediments and restrictions.

The last fifteen years prove to me that English teachers are being affected by theory and research. What worries me is whether we English teachers are significantly more able to shape, control and reject the subtle influences which come at us. How well do we know our cosmic egg?

APPENDIX

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Condon, S. (Aust)
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Coombes, Sandra (Aust)
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Cottew, Ainsley (Aust)
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Maclennan, G. (Aust)
Macpherson, Jillian (Aust)
MacRae, Bernadette (Aust)
Madill, C. (NZ)
Magennis, Robyn (Aust)
Maher, M. (Aust)
Mainwaring, R. (NZ)
Malcolm, I. (Aust)
Mallick, D. (Aust)
Mancini, Anne (Aust)
March, P. (Aust)
Marjoribanks, Jan (Aust)
Marsden, J. (Aust)
Marsh, R. (NZ)
Martin, J. (Aust)
Martin, R. (NZ)
Martyn, L. (Aust)
Matthews, C. (Aust)
Matthews, G. (Aust)
Maurency, Margaret (Aust)
Mawasha, A. (SA)
Meaker, Joan (Aust)
Mehigan, Wendy (Aust)
Meiers, Maion (Aust)
Mendham, H. (Aust)
Mercer, Jane (Aust)
Middleton, S. (NZ)
Midland, Monica (Aust)
Miller, Janie (NZ)
Miller, Margaret (Aust)
Millett, A. (Aust)
Millett, Elizabeth (Aust)
Milligan, W. (Aust)
Mitchell, Isabel (Aust)
Mitchell, R. (NZ)
Moechtar, Kay (Aust)
Moffett, J. (USA)
Mog, Cynthia (USA)
Monsour, Patricia (Aust)
Moore, Elizabeth (Aust)
Moore, A. (Aust)
Moore, Frances (Aust)
Moore, Helen (Aust)
Moran, Robyn (NZ)
Morgan, Patricia (Aust)
Morkham, Bronwyn (Aust)

Morris, A. (Aust)
Morris, D. (Aust)
Moss, D. (Aust)
Moss, P. (Aust)
Mowbray, P. (Aust)
Mulcahy, Dianne (Aust)
Murison, Molly (Aust)
Murphy, Monica (USA)
Murray, Kevin (Aust)
Murtagh, Anne (Can)
Nanako Fukui (PRC)
Neale, F. (UK)
Neale, Margaret (Aust)
Neill, E. (Aust)
Neville, Mollie (NZ)
Nettle, K. (UK)
Newsome, B. (Aust)
Ney, J. (USA)
Ng, Winnie (Sing)
Nicholls, Christine (Aust)
Nicholls, Deidre (Aust)
Nicoll, Vivienne (Aust)
Nixon, Helen (Aust)
Noble, Barbara (Can)
Noble, M. (Aust)
Nolan, Joan (Aust)
Nolan, Kaye (Aust)
Norst, Marlene (Aust)
Nottle, G. (Aust)
Nunns, R. (NZ)
O'Brien, T. (Aust)
O'Donnell, R. (USA)
O'Halloran, S. (Aust)
O'Shea, Therese (Aust)
Oberg, T. (Aust)
Ogilvie, G. (NZ)
Oliver, Robin (NZ)
Osborne, D. (Aust)
Otzen, Roslyn (Aust)
Overbury, B. (Aust)
Packman, Jean (NZ)
Pagani, Mirella (Aust)
Pannell, Sujatha (Aust)
Paquette, J. (UK)
Parker, Judy (Aust)
Parker, P. (Aust)
Paterson, Elizabeth (Aust)
Paton, J. (SA)
Patterson, Esther (Aust)
Paull, A. (Aust)
Peacock, Dianne (Aust)
Pearce, Diana (Aust)
Pearce, Sally (Aust)
Pemberton, D. (Aust)
Pengilley, Jan (Aust)
Petraki, E. (Aust)
Peterson, K. (Aust)
Phemister, R. (Aust)
Phillip, Joan (Aust)
Phillips, Joy (Aust)
Pike, D. (Aust)
Porter, Wendy (Aust)
Prain, V. (Aust)
Prendergast, Lisl (NZ)
Price, I. (Aust)
Price, K. (NZ)
Price, Veronica (NZ)
Pringle, I. (Can)
Pritchett, B. (NZ)
Punke, G. (Can)
Punke, Monica (Can)
Putnis, P. (Aust)
Quin, P. (NZ)
Rainey, P. (Aust)
Ramsay, Margaret (Aust)
Rathgen, Elody (NZ)
Rehn, R. (Aust)
Reid, I. (Aust)
Reid, Jo-anne (Aust)
Reidy, Joanne (Aust)
Renehan, W. (Aust)
Reynolds, C. (Aust)
Rice, Joyce (Aust)
Richards, Judith (NZ)
Richards, L. (NZ)
Richardson, B. (Aust)
Richardson, J. (Aust)
Richardson, P. (Aust)
Rickwood, Janet (Aust)
Ridden, B. (Aust)
Riley, Pamela (Aust)
Riordan, Lorraine (Aust)
Rivers, Margaret (Aust)
Roberts, Lucy (Aust)
Roberts, Philippa (Aust)
Robinson, D. (Aust)
Robinson, Esme (Aust)
Rodgers, P. (NZ)
Rogers, Deborah (Aust)
Rose, Isobel (NZ)
Rose, Shoshanna-Ronah (Aust)
Rose, Ursula (NZ)
Rosen, Elizabeth (UK)
Rosen, H. (UK)

Rothery, Joan (Aust)
Rush, E. (Aust)
Russell, E. (Aust)
Ryan, Carole (Aust)
Ryan, Jeanette (Aust)
Ryan, Josephine (Aust)
Ryan, T. (Aust)
Ryman, Frances (NZ)
Sakey, Lorna (NZ)
Salter, Mary (Aust)
Sanguinetti, Jill (Aust)
Savage, Wilfrid (Aust)
Sawyer, W. (Aust)
Scales, Christine (Aust)
Scanlan, J. (Aust)
Scanlon, A. (Aust)
Schinke, S. (USA)
Schwartz, Sheila (USA)
Scott, H. (NZ)
Scott, J. (NZ)
Scott-Mitchell, Clare (Aust)
Seinor, Carol (Aust)
Seltin, Pauline (Aust)
Sexton, Teresita (Aust)
Shafer, R. (USA)
Sheedy, J. (Aust)
Shelton, J. (Aust)
Showell, B. (Aust)
Shrubb, G. (Aust)
Shurman, Norma (Aust)
Sics, Astrid (Aust)
Silgardo, Ilona (Aust)
Simpson, Margaret (Aust)
Sims, Christina (NZ)
Sinclair, R. (Aust)
Singer, Renata (Aust)
Skevington, Margaret (NZ)
Slocombe, Julie (Aust)
Smart, P. (NZ)
Smith, Annette (Aust)
Smith, A. (Aust)
Smith, Caroline (Aust)
Smith, C. (Aust)
Smith, D. (Aust)
Smith, Glenys (Aust)
Smith, Janeen (Aust)
Smith, Janice (Aust)
Smith, R. (Aust)
Smith, R. (Aust)
Smith, Victoria (Aust)
Sneddon, Helen (Aust)
Sooby, A. (Aust)
Sourry, Mavis (Aust)
Spear, Sheila (Aust)
Speier, Patricia (USA)
Speier, P. (USA)
Spencer, Margaret (UK)
Spreadbury, Julie (Aust)
Staiff, R. (Aust)
Stanley, Ann (Aust)
Stanyon, Jackie (Aust)
Starkey, Sandra (Aust)
Steele, R. (Aust)
Stephens, H. (Aust)
Stewart, Maureen (Aust)
Stewart, R. (Aust)
Stone, M. (Aust)
Stratta, L. (UK)
Strong, Rosalind (Aust)
Sucher, M. (USA)
Sullivan, Theresa (PRC)
Summerfield, G. (UK)
Sutherland, G. (Aust)
Swift, J. (USA)
Sykes, Heather (Aust)
Talty, J. (Aust)
Tasker, Beulah (Aust)
Tebble, Helen (Aust)
Thepboondham, Urai (Thai)
Thirkell, Judith (Aust)
Thodey, Margaret (Aust)
Thodey, P. (Aust)
Thomas, Althea (Aust)
Thomas, G. (Aust)
Thomas, Jenny (Aust)
Thompson, Helen (Aust)
Thompson, Jane (Aust)
Thomson, J. (Aust)
Thompson, Margaret (Aust)
Thompson, Nancy (USA)
Thorpe, C. (Aust)
Tilby, Jenny (NZ)
Tippett, Helen (Aust)
Tisay, Lynette (Aust)
Tooth, Terence (Aust)
Tomlinson, D. (Aust)
Towe, Amanda (Aust)
Townsend, M. (Aust)
Travis, Beverly (Aust)
Trembath, Annette (Aust)
Tremwan, P. (NZ)
Trenwith, J. (NZ)
Trenwith, Lynne (NZ)
Tucker, E. (Aust)

Tunstall, J. (Aust)
Tuohy, B. (NZ)
Turnbill, Jan (Aust)
Turner, T. (NZ)
Vale, Margaret (Aust)
Vallance, Hilary (Aust)
Vandertoun, Carel (Aust)
Vinycomb, Anne (Aust)
Waddell, B. (Aust)
Wagner, Betty (USA)
Wainwright, Adrienne (Aust)
Wakeham, P. (Aust)
Walker, Adrienne (Aust)
Wallace, I. (Aust)
Walsh, L. (Aust)
Walsh, Maureen (Aust)
Walshe, R. (Aust)
Walton, Kim (Aust)
Wang, Guo-fu (PRC)
Ward, G. (Aust)
Ward, J. (Aust)
Wardle, Freda (Aust)
Wardrop, K. (Aust)
Warrell, B. (Aust)
Waterer, A. (Aust)
Waters, Christine (Aust)
Watson, J. (NZ)
Watson, K. (Aust)
Watson, Sue (NZ)
Watts, J. (UK)
Webb, Christine (Aust)
Weekes, Christine (Aust)
Wheeler, H. (Aust)
Whelan, R. (NZ)
White, Carol (NZ)
White, Heather (NZ)
White, S. (NZ)
Whitehead, Mary (Aust)
Whyle, I. (NZ)
Willcock, Rosalie (Aust)
Williams, G. (Aust)
Williams, G. (Aust)
Williams, Kerry (Aust)
Willis, Helen (Aust)
Willson, T. (Aust)
Wilson, D. (Aust)
Wilson, Julie (Aust)
Wilson, Lorraine (Aust)
Wilson-Lamb, Leona (NZ)
Winder, A. (Aust)
Winder, J. (NZ)
Wise, Billie (USA)
Wood, Eileen (Aust)
Wood, R. (Aust)
Woolf, Pamela (NZ)
Woolley, Janice (Aust)
Wootton, Astrid (Aust)
Wootten, T. (Aust)
Worladge, Helen (Aust)
Yang, Chao-guang (PRC)
Youl, B. (Aust)
Young, D. (Aust)
Zhao, T. (Aust)
Zheng, Rong (Aust)
Zubrinich, R. (Aust)
Zussman, Barbara (USA)
Zwangobani, Elaine (Aust)

Part Time Delegates

[Because not all Australian school systems were on vacation during the period of the conference, a number of teachers were able to register only for the late afternoon and evening sessions when plenary papers were scheduled specifically for their benefit.]

Bahr, Susan (Aust)
Beasley, D. (Aust)
Beckett, Lorraine (Aust)
Behan, Genevieve (Aust)
Beringer, J. (Aust)
Bradford, Clare (Aust)
Bryant, Karen (Aust)
Bye, Joy (Aust)
Clifford, Doreen (Aust)
Collins, M. (Aust)
Collins, Susan (Aust)
Dietrich, C. (Aust)
Doherty, R. (Aust)
Durham, Marsha (Aust)
Farrar, P. (Aust)
Ferguson, C. (Aust)
Fiala, Barbara (Aust)
Flood, E. (Aust)
Flood, Robyn (Aust)
Geikie, P. (Aust)
Gracey, Margaret (Aust)
Guterres, Annette (Aust)

Hewitt, D. (Aust)
Hewitt, Jane (Aust)
Hill, R. (Aust)
Isles, E. (Aust)
Jensen, Dot (Aust)
Johnson, L. (Aust)
Johnstone, Elizabeth (Aust)
Kennedy, T. (Aust)
Kossy, Janet (Aust)
Lawler, Annette (Aust)
Lewin, Rosemary (Aust)
Lloyd, Joanne (Aust)
Lloyd, Sandra (Aust)
MacRae, Bernadette (Aust)
Maas, Lorraine (Aust)
McFadden, Meredith (Aust)
McGarrity, Barbara (Aust)
McGregor, R. (Aust)
McKelvey, D. (Aust)
McMahon, Ann (Aust)
Molloy, F. (Aust)
Murphy, Maureen (Aust)
Murray, J. (Aust)
Neustein, Janet (Aust)
Nicholls, Olivia (Aust)
Pedersen, M. (Aust)
Rice, A. (Aust)
Riedel, Mavis (Aust)
Sawyer, W. (Aust)
Selway, M. (Aust)
Stewart, J. (Aust)
Stiles, P. (Aust)
Trim, M. (Aust)
Vo, Anne (Aust)
Walker, Katrina (Aust)
Waterer, A. (Aust)
White, Lima (Aust)
Wilhelm, Linda (Aust)
Wilson, Robbie (Aust)

Publishers and Representatives

Ashton Scholastic: Gardiner, D., Shepherd, G., Sweeney, L.
Cambridge University Press: Kamerman, S.
William Collins: Parslow, R.
Educational Suppliers Association: Stevenson, K.
Harcourt Brace: Fox, G.
Heinemann Educational Books: Hudson, N., Nettle, K.
Holt-Saunders: Flynn, Judith; Muller, P.
Jacaranda-Wiley: Champion, B.; Watson, Sue
Longman, Cheshire: Roering, C.
Macmillan: Bradley, T.; McCurdy, B.
Maskew-Miller: Harlech-Jones, B.
McGraw-Hill: Jackson, Katie
Pitman: Carter, Annette; Lymberg, Karyn
Sorrett: Coghill, I.